METRO / A19

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, August 22, 2007 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 255 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

If Ninoy had come home to cheers, not bullets ...

By Norman Bordadora and Volt Contreras

WHAT IF 24 YEARS AGO CHEERS RATHER than gunshots at the airport had greeted the return of ex-Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. from self-exile?

What if the charismatic opposition leader was simply whisked back to prison by his

IF NINOY/A10

Issue of closure splits Ninoy kin

By the PDI Staff

THE FAMILY OF ASSASSINATED OPPOSITION leader Benigno Aquino was divided yesterday on whether Filipinos should now put closure to his murder that sparked the People Power Revolution and led to the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Aquino's widow Corazon, who became President after Marcos, said she respected former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa but did not agree with him that Filipinos should now move on 24 years after the assassination.

"Until the soldiers themselves admit complicity, there would be no closure," said the ex-President before Mass was said at the Manila Memorial Park commemorating the death anniversary of her husband.

"They have not told me, they have not told the court, who ordered them. They are still pointing at Galman," the widow said of the position of the 16 soldiers sentenced to life imprisonment for the assassination that alleged communist hitman Rolando Galman had killed her husband. "They are not telling the truth," she said.

Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III said he was at peace with the death of his father but he still would like to know

ISSUE/ A11

ROGER MARGALLO

THE TORCH IS PASSED: On the 24th death anniversary of his father, Sen. Benigno Aquino III delivers his first privilege speech on extrajudicial killings.

Noynoy sees similarity between GMA, Marcos

By Dona Pazzibugan

ON THE 24TH ANNIVERSARY OF HIS father's martyrdom, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III lambasted the Arroyo administration for the unabated political killings, and said its uncaring attitude bore a "chilling similarity" to the indifference of the Marcos dictatorship when his father was murdered at the airport in 1983.

The 47-year-old opposition senator compared the string of extrajudicial killings under President Macapagal-Arroyo to the spate of political murders and disappearances during the time of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

He underscored the case of activist Jonas Burgos, who has been missing since April 28 after being abducted from a Quezon City mall.

Former President Corazon Aquino sat in the gallery beside Burgos' mother, Edita, to watch her son deliver his first privilege speech as a senator.

Despite the entreaties of some senators, Ms Aquino refused to sit in the VIP gallery. Instead, she sat beside former

NOYNOY SEES/ A10

'I heard GMA, Garci talk'

She asked about 1-M votes, claims ex-intelligence agent

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SAYING HE WAS NO LONGER AFRAID, A FORMER ARMY sergeant yesterday broke his two-year silence, admitting that he and a group of soldiers had personally tapped the phone conversations of President Macapagal-Arroyo and heard her ask former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano about "the additional 1 million votes" in the 2004 elections.

Former TSgt. Vidal Doble Jr., who used to be an Armed Forces intelligence agent, said in a video testimony presented in the Senate that he actually heard Ms Arroyo and Garcillano talking when he used a 3600 Nokia cell phone to tape their conversation.

"We were all surprised when PGMA called Garcillano and she was asking about the additional one million votes," Doble said.

Doble said that fear for the safety of his family—who he claimed was detained by the military in a basement—made him keep quiet but now he could no longer appease his conscience.

"The Garci tapes are true. If they want, I can prove it. I have nothing to fear anymore. I am already a civilian. I just want this issue to end that has been bothering me inside," Doble said in the video, where he was interviewed by a certain lawyer Alex Avisado.

The Garci tapes purportedly proved

I HEARD/ A15

ROGER MARGALLO

EXHIBIT A: The exposé of Senator Lacson in the Senate on Tuesday centers around retired Isafp agent Vidal Doble Jr., who claims in his video testimony that he could not speak up the past two years as his family was detained by ex-AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu.

MAGSAYSAY AWARDS

Nepalese teacher brings Internet to his village

MAHABIR PUN: Got tired of going up and down the mountain.

By Massie Santos Ballon

THIS WAS HOW MAHABIR PUN EXplained why he brought wireless Internet access to his hometown village of Nangi in the Nepalese mountains: "The main reason we started this networking project is because I needed that, I needed Internet in the village."

"Until that time, I used to come to Pokhara ... at least once a month to check my e-mails and send e-mails and to come again because there was no Internet in the village. I did that for several years ... I was tired of coming down here just to communicate," Pun laughed.

A decade after deciding he no longer wanted to spend half the day traveling to the nearest Internet café to read his e-mail, Pun's wish

NEPALESE/ A8

Advice to lovelorn: You'll survive

CHICAGO—BREAKING UP ... IT'S NOT THAT HARD TO DO.

Despite the lament of pining pop stars and sad sack poets, US researchers now think that breaking up may not be so hard to do.

"We underestimate our ability to survive heartbreak," said Eli Finkel, an assistant professor of psychology at Northwestern University, whose study appears online in the Journal of Experimental Social Psychology.

ADVICE/ A8

DI NAMAN PALA GANUN KASAKIT!

RP stocks soar but jitters remain

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PHILIPPINE SHARE PRICES YESTERday rocketed to their biggest single-day point rise in 17 years as investors jumped back into equities after Monday's holiday, anxious not to miss out on the strong market rebound.

The 29-company Philippine Stock Exchange index (PSEi), a major barometer of investor confidence in the local economy, soared 283.18 points from Friday's close, to 3,167.52.

Yesterday's surge surpassed the 255.13-point gain on Jan. 22, 2001—the first trading day after President Joseph Estrada was ousted on corruption allegations and Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo came to power. That day in 2001, however, saw the PSEi registering a 17.6-percent rise, higher than yesterday's 9.8-percent jump.

On Friday, the PSEi fell 2 percent to 2,884.34, ending a week that saw the market lose all its gains since Jan. 1. But Tuesday's rebound boosted the market's capitalization—the value of all listed stocks based on prevailing prices—by

RP STOCKS/ A15

EDUCATION IN CRISIS

GMA on dropouts: Let them sweep streets

(Last of three parts)

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO says she prefers to see out-of-school youths go back to the classroom or be given jobs as street cleaners—rather than spend money on an expensive learning module straight out of cyberspace for them.

Ms Arroyo's game plan was outlined last Nov. 21 during a Cabinet meeting that updated the President on the implementation of various projects envisioned in a "cyber corridor," which she outlined in her State of the Nation Address in 2006.

T-TEAM *Report*

By **Fernando del Mundo**
Chief

Ramon Sales, chief of the Commission on Information, Communications and Technology, was talking about an alternative education module—eEskuela—for school dropouts and illiterate adults using the World Wide Web when he was interrupted by Ms Arroyo, according to a transcript of the meeting made available to the INQUIRER.

"No, let them go to school," Ms Arroyo huffed. "If they are out of school, you give them a job, like cleaning the street, cleaning the *estero*. Why should you give them the Internet ... This project is *masyadong mahal* (too expensive)."

"*Sino ba ang nag-initiate ng mga ito* (Who started this bright idea)? Especially if we're gonna have to spend money for it, never mind if it is a grant," Ms Arroyo added.

The President sounded more realistic than Marie Antoinette, who famously said "Let them eat cake" when

GMA ON DROPOUTS/ A15

EZ2 27 20 | **SIX DIGIT** 8 2 7 5 7 3

Mid-Day SUERTRES Evening
7 9 7 | 3 5 5
(All in exact order)

6/42 LUZON/VIS-MIN
1 3 12 18 24 31
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Second FrontPage

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western sections of Northern and Central Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	**Iloilo/Bacolod**	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Mostly Cloudy	**Roxas**	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	**Cebu**	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Mostly Cloudy	**Tacloban**	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Mostly Cloudy	**Gen. Santos**	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	**Zamboanga**	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	**Cagayan de Oro**	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	**Davao**	Partly Cloudy

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GMA orders tighter security all over

Spillover of conflict in Sulu, Basilan to other areas feared

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Michael Lim Ubac

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo ordered the military and the police to bolster security across the nation as she warned that a military offensive against terrorists in Mindanao could prompt retaliatory terror elsewhere in the country.

She said the government will not ease off the offensive despite calls from Church leaders to halt the fighting because this would endanger the country's security, fail to give justice to the slain soldiers and embolden terrorists.

"We understand those who want to stop the war but we should remember that there will be no security in our country if we cannot give justice to our soldiers who are defending our nation," the President said in a television address before the start of a National Security Council meeting yesterday.

"Instead, the terrorists will be emboldened if they will not be made to pay for their dastardly acts against our soldier-heroes," Ms Arroyo said in Filipino.

She urged the people to unite behind the Armed Forces: "Let us honor our soldiers who fought, died and were wounded in Basilan and Sulu. Their sacrifice should not be in vain. We shall not retreat from battle to give justice to our Marines and to bring peace and progress to our country."

The Philippine National Police, meanwhile, raised its alert level in Metro Manila and other areas on Monday in anticipation of a possible spillover of the conflict in Sulu and Basilan.

Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, PNP spokesperson, said the police were on red alert in the six regions in Mindanao and Metro Manila.

In other parts of Luzon and the Visayas, it is on heightened alert.

It was the third time the NSC convened since July 10 when 14 Marines were killed in an ambush by the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Ten of the 14 Marines were beheaded, which was blamed on the Abu Sayyaf extremist group which is linked to the al-Qaida international terror group.

The President ordered a limited military offensive last week, deploying thousands of troops to hunt the killers in Basilan and on nearby Jolo where the military had suffered heavy losses in recent ambushes.

On Aug. 9, the Armed Forces suffered its biggest single-day loss in decades when 26 soldiers died in two clashes with the Abu Sayyaf on Jolo.

Last Saturday, 15 Marines and an Air Force pilot were killed when Marines launched an attack on an Abu Sayyaf camp in Basilan in the area of the July 10 ambush.

But while ordering the military offensive to continue, the President emphasized that economic development remained the government's principal weapon against terrorism.

Yesterday she signed Executive Order 192 to implement the directive she issued on Sunday for a humanitarian intervention in Basilan and Sulu.

She said police and military operations would be balanced with a full-scale development offensive, which she called a "humanitarian invasion."

"Despite the recent hostilities, Basilan and Sulu are by no means a war zone," she said, explaining that EO 192 was an all-encompassing "action plan" for the two provinces. It uses the acronym HELP, which stands for health, education, livelihood and progress.

She dispatched various Cabinet officials to Sulu and Basilan "to ensure the care and comfort of those who might be displaced" by the ongoing conflict.

Ms Arroyo also said the government would continue to pursue peace in Mindanao and hoped to resume talks with the MILF next month in Malaysia. *(See story on Page 17.)*

With reports from Alcuin Papa, in Manila, and Julie S. Alipala, Nash B. Maulana and Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

Yano is new Army chief

SOUTHERN LUZON COMmand chief Lt. Gen. Alexander Yano yesterday was named the new Philippine Army head replacing Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino who is retiring on Friday.

Yano was among seven officers posted by President Macapagal-Arroyo to Sulu and Basilan to oversee the operations against the Abu Sayyaf.

Lt. Gen. Rodolfo S. Obaniana, commander of the Eastern Mindanao Command (Eastmincom) covering central, southern and northern Mindanao will take over as Solcom chief.

Taking Obaniana's place at Eastmincom is Lt. Gen. Cardozo M. Luna, commander of the Central Command (Centcom). Luna served as Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Military Operations (G7) of the Army and chief of the Defense Intelligence and Security Group.

Luna will be replaced at Centcom by Maj. Gen. Victor B. Ibrado, current chief of the Special Operations Command which oversees the Scout Rangers, Special Forces and the counterterrorist Light Reaction Battalion.

Lt. Gen. Eugene Cedo, commander of the Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom), who is set to retire on Sept. 6, will be replaced by Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga.

Maj. Gen. Ben Dolorfino, the most senior Marine officer after Allaga and current head of the National Capital Region Command, will be the new Marine commandant.

Taking over the NCRCom is Maj. Gen. Fernando L. Mesa, a "well-known intelligence and civil military operations officer." *Christine O. Avendaño*

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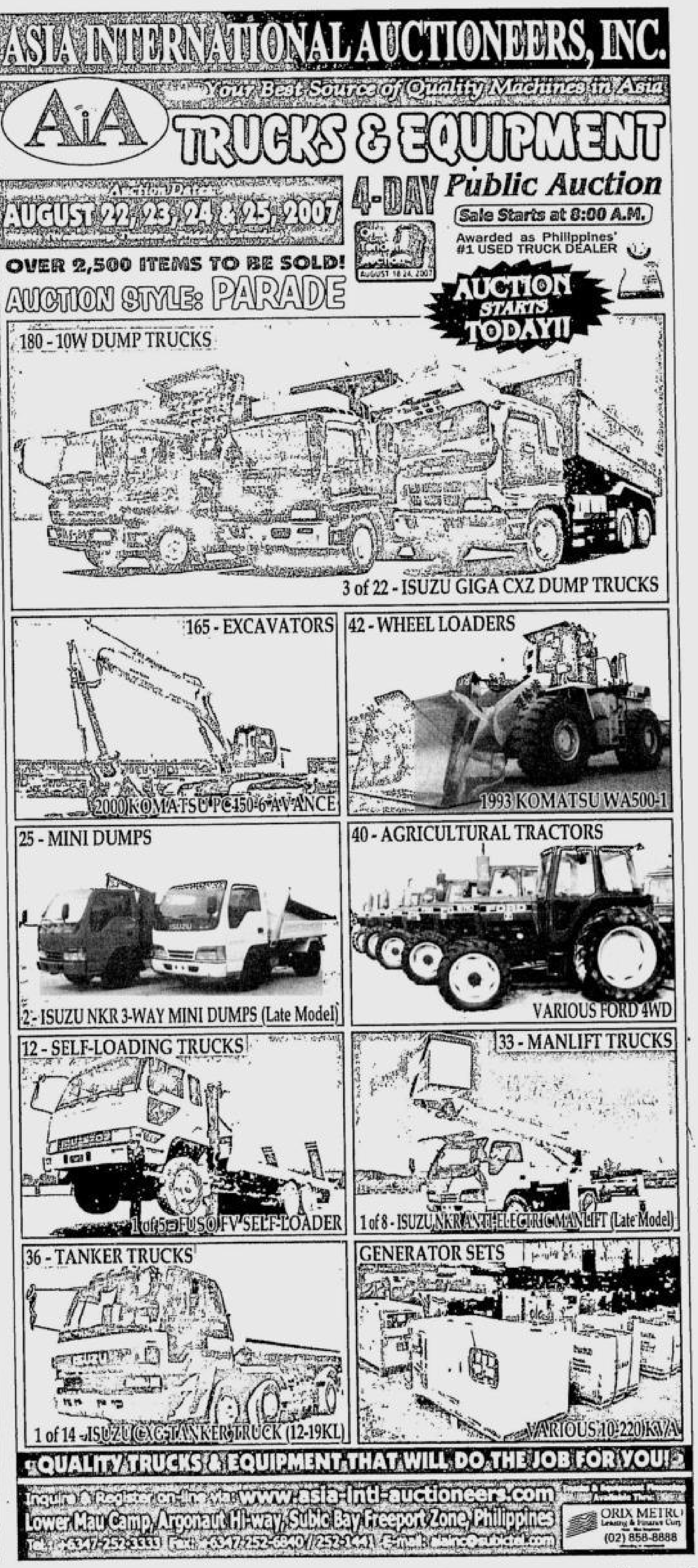
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God knows, says bishop of intentions

STRICTLY SPEAKING, MASS INTENTIONS, such as those for the dead, need not be read out loud to make it known they are part of the rites, a Catholic bishop said yesterday.

"The merits of a Mass are infinite. They are for the whole Church, for everyone," said Caloocan Bishop Deogracias Iñiguez, chair of the Commission on Public Affairs of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

Iñiguez said it had become "tradition" to read Mass intentions out loud "to give an opportunity for the faithful's special intentions to be heard."

"It became a trend when the prayers for the faithful were introduced as part of the Mass," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Iñiguez said his statement was not directed at the wife of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, who was reported by the INQUIRER to have reprimanded Msgr. Albert Songco of St. Ignatius Cathedral at Camp Aguinaldo for failing to mention a special intention for the Marines killed in Jolo, Sulu, during a Sunday Mass that she attended.

The bishop said he only read about the incident in the INQUIRER.

Dr. Lorna Esperon explained later that she did not "bawl out" Songco, but that their conversation in his office after the Mass could have been misconstrued as a dressing-down since she was speaking loudly because her voice was hoarse.

"God is aware of all our needs even before we pray for them," Iñiquez said in an earlier interview over Church-run Radio Veritas after the incident. *Nikko Dizon*

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Bongbong: Tan gave me tour of businesses

By Jocelyn R. Uy

ILOCOS NORTE REP. FERDINAND "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. testified yesterday that tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan once gave him a tour of one of the firms allegedly entrusted to the taipan by his late father, President Ferdinand Marcos, and Tan showed him how he should run it in the future.

Marcos gave this testimony at the Sandiganbayan yesterday in support of his claim that 60 percent of Tan's corporate holdings belonged to his father.

His testimony was part of the Presidential Commission on Good Government's bid to recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcoses that were held for them by close associates of the late strongman.

Tan's lawyer, Estelito Mendoza will cross-examine Marcos today.

Yesterday's, Marcos presented copies of a deed of assignment which showed how the assets of his father and Tan were placed in Shareholdings Inc., a holding company for all the companies now controlled by Tan.

These included Fortune Tobacco Corp., Asia Brewery Inc., Allied Banking Corp., Foremost Farms, Himmel Industries Inc., Grandspan Development Corp., Silangan Holdings Inc. and Dominium Realty and Construction Corp.

But Associate Justice Ma. Cristina Cortez-Estrada ruled that the PCGG should present the original documents or establish secondary evidence before Marcos' testimony pertaining to the documents could be admitted in court.

Marcos said the US Customs Service was in possession of the original documents since they were confiscated from the family when they arrived at Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii on Feb. 26, 1986.

"We hoped to produce them today but due to bureaucratic reasons there was a delay and they would be available around mid-October," Marcos told the court.

Marcos said he was first introduced to Tan by his father in the 1970s.

He said Tan was often summoned to Malacañang by his father who would meet with the businessman in the "study room," which was next to his father's office.

At one of the meetings, Marcos recalled that his father and Tan discussed how he wanted his son to familiarize himself with the operations of the "enterprise he has an interest in."

Tan had allegedly said that he would help Bongbong learn how to run the businesses.

When Tan supposedly went abroad, his father called him and his sister, Imee, to a meeting and instructed them to conduct an inventory and audit of all the businesses he owned, Bongbong said.

During that meeting, Marcos showed them documents—such as the deeds of assignment of shares of stock, titles of properties—and drew a "sketch" of how the structures worked.

It was at this time that he first saw the original documents, which are now in US custody, Bongbong said.

His second meeting with Tan was at his Allied Bank office, where the businessman presented to him the ownership structure of the different companies his late father had an interest in.

"He drew a diagram on a piece of paper of the company Shareholdings Inc.," Marcos said in court.

According to Bongbong, Tan also took him to the Asia Brewery plant in Laguna in a helicopter.

"He took me around ... [to show] the general operations of the plant," he said.

Their recent encounter—a dinner-meeting at the residence of the late Louie Tabuena, former Marcos-era airport manager, sometime in March 1995 was rather awkward, he said.

Tan allegedly expressed his anger at Rolando Gapud, the Marcoses' financial manager who had supposedly branded him a Marcos crony.

"He said 'I don't like Rolly Gapud. He is trying to say I am a crony but I was never part of their business endeavors,'" Bongbong quoted Tan as saying.

Shocked to hear such a comment from his father's supposed business partner, Bongbong told Tan: "You seem to have forgotten the agreements made in the past." Tan did not reply, he recalled.

But before the dinner-meeting ended, Tan supposedly handed him a check for P1 million for his election campaign. "I was upset. I tore the check up to the distress of my wife," Marcos said.

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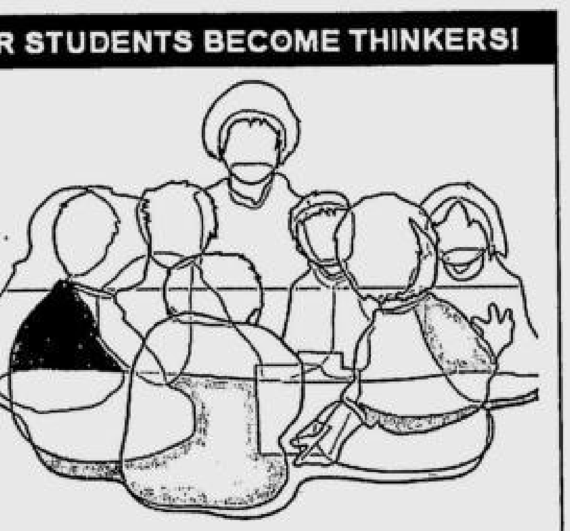

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Gov't goes after Marcos funds held by aide in Switzerland

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION on Good Government (PCGG) will ask Swiss authorities to turn over to the Philippine government the estimated $8.82 million (over P440 million) in the Zurich-based bank accounts of Fe Roa Gimenez, the former social secretary of the late President Ferdinand Marcos.

The PCGG has prepared a petition asking the Swiss Federal Supreme Court to repatriate the deposits with Adler & Co. AG Bankgeschaft in the names of Gimenez, her husband Ignacio, and Roberto Olanday, a half-brother of Ignacio, which they said was part of the late dictator's ill-gotten wealth.

"We're confident (the Swiss court) will act favorably on our petition," PCGG Commissioner Nicasio Conti told the INQUIRER.

The recovered funds "will go to the government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program," Conti said.

Last week, the PCGG asked the Supreme Court to dismiss a petition filed by Ignacio Gimenez and Olanday questioning the forfeiture of the Swiss deposits.

The commission said the petitioners were merely trying to delay the forfeiture ruling, hoping it would be made moot by a Swiss statute of limitations on frozen bank accounts.

The government body tasked to retrieve Marcos' hidden wealth also accused the two alleged dummies of the late dictator of "forum shopping," saying their petitions for the lifting of the freeze order had been rejected by the Swiss courts at least nine times and twice by the Sandiganbayan.

In a 26-page decision in December, Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Teresita de Castro ruled the Adler Bank account in the name of the Panamanian-registered firm G.E.I. was ill-gotten.

According to court records, the firm was set up in 1985 supposedly to sell preneed educational plans with a declared capitalization of P10 million. An account with the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank branch in Zurich opened after the fall of the Marcos regime in 1986 was later transferred to the Adler Bank in the name of Olanday.

According to the PCGG, the funds were "unlawfully acquired by the spouses Gimenez—in conspiracy with Olanday—and are grossly disproportionate to their lawful income."

From 1981 to 1985, the Gimenez couple declared a total net worth of only P955,273, said the commission.

In January, Ignacio Gimenez and Olanday asked the antigraft court to reconsider its decision, arguing that they had been denied due process. The Sandiganbayan rejected their motion, prompting them to bring the matter to the Supreme Court.

Aside from the Gimenez bank deposits, the PCGG said "additional recoveries are forthcoming as a result of the Supreme Court decision (dated Nov. 23, 2005) declaring the estate of the late publisher of the Manila Bulletin, Hans Menzi, as also part of Marcos' hidden wealth."

The ruling affirmed a Sandiganbayan resolution declaring as ill-gotten the 46,626 Bulletin shares of Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., and another 198,052 shares in the name of Jose Y. Campos, among others.

"The proceeds from the sale of 198,052 shares deposited in Philtrust Bank, plus interest of P124.3 million, were declared forfeited in favor of the government," said the PCGG.

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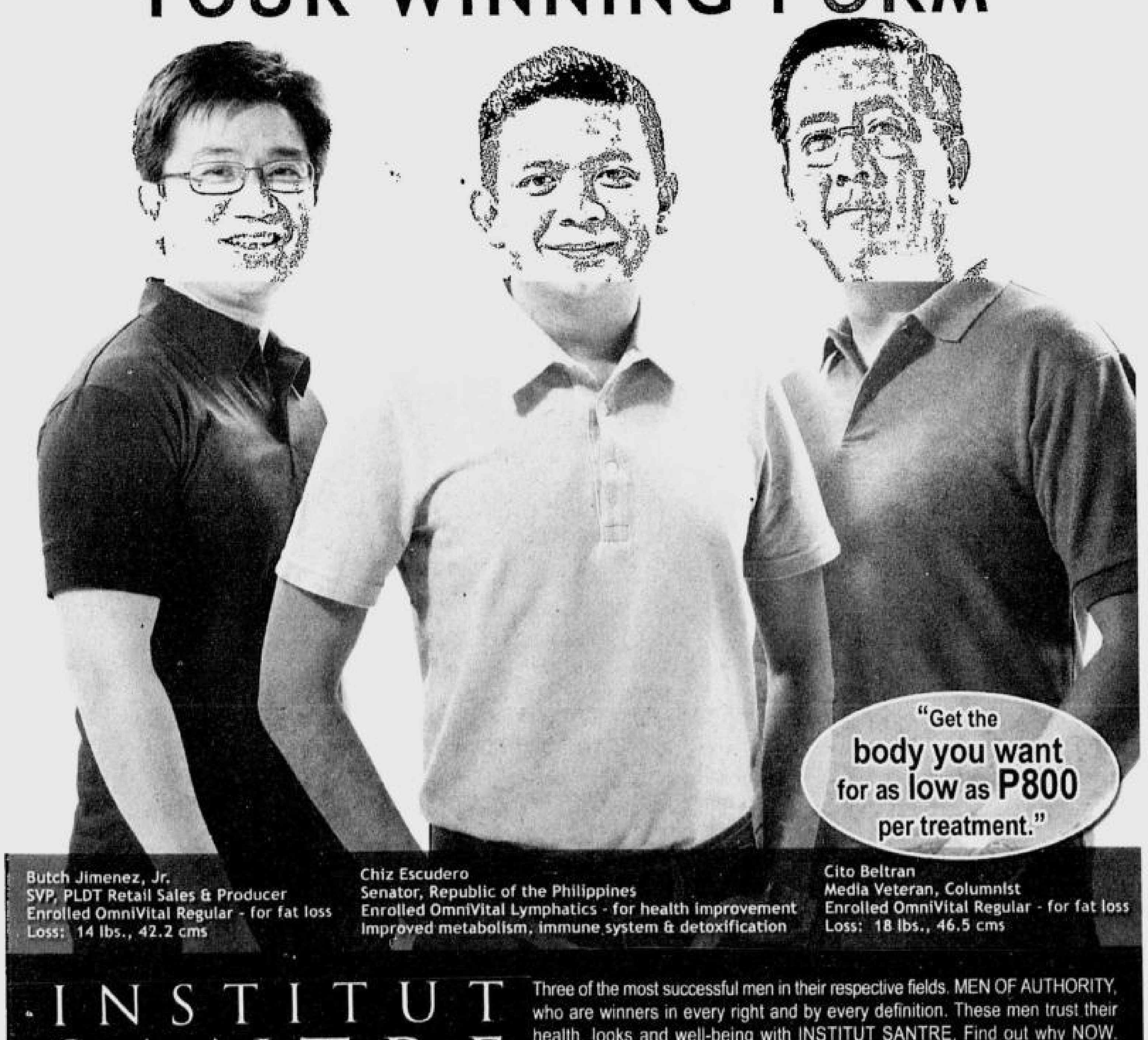
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2 quakes hit RP Monday

DAVAO CITY—A MAGNITUDE 6.6 earthquake struck off the coast of Mindanao on Monday night but there were no reports of injuries or damage.

The tremor which struck at around 9:46 p.m. followed similar strong quakes that hit Indonesia and other countries last week. No tsunami warning was issued.

Desiderio Cabanlit, officer in charge of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology here, said the quake's epicenter was traced to 209 kilometers southeast of Mati, Davao Oriental.

"It was tectonic in origin and had a depth of 10 kilometers, meaning its origin was shallow," he said. "We are expecting aftershocks because the area affected was quite large."

The quake was felt in several provinces. It was at Intensity 3 in Cateel, Davao Oriental. It registered Intensity 2 in Bislig, Surigao del Sur; San Francisco in Agusan del Sur, Davao City and Kidapawan City in North Cotabato, and Intensity 1 in Butuan.

In Pampanga, telephone company Digitel reported experiencing an "international cable break," which disrupted Internet services on Tuesday.

Digitel was checking if this was related to the 3.2 magnitude earthquake that shook Central Luzon and Metro Manila at 11:24 a.m.

Its field personnel were doing restoration work in the meantime.

There were also no reports of injuries or damage.

The quake's epicenter was 22 km northeast of Olongapo City at a depth of 13 km, Phivolcs said. *Allan Nawal, Inquirer Mindanao; Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon; and Inquirer wires*

Tears fill Marine gym again

From page A18

nasium, the family of Cpl. Peary Simeros couldn't hide their anguish as they wept.

Simeros still bore bruises on his face.

Florante and Manuel Domingo quietly watched over the body of their nephew, Cpl. Virgilio Domingo III, whose parents were expected to arrive yesterday from General Santos City.

Domingo, who joined the Marines in 2005, turned 24 a day after he was killed.

President Macapagal-Arroyo arrived at Fort Bonifacio yesterday at 6:20 p.m. to personally offer her condolences to the families of 13 Marines.

Accompanied by AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino, Navy chief Rear Admiral Rogelio Calunsag and Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Nelson Allaga, the President stopped before the row of caskets and offered a prayer.

Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro joined Ms Arroyo as she spent 3 to 5 minutes with representatives of the bereaved families. She also handed each of them an envelope which reportedly contained P100,000.

In Cotabato City, a hero's welcome awaits 2nd Lt. Eugene Requeerme Piñera Jr., the first and only Philippine Military Academy graduate from Upi, Shariff Kabunsuan, who died in the clash with the Abu Sayyaf on Saturday.

His remains are expected to arrive in Cotabato City today.

Mayor Ramon Piang Sr. said Piñera's death was a great loss to the country and to Upi, an upland town in Shariff Kabunsuan known for its corn and other high value crops.

Piñera was the only boy among three siblings. He was high school valedictorian at St. Francis Academy seven years ago. Becoming a Marine was his dream while in high school, his parents, Eugene and Lyn, Glory said. *With Edwin O. Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

SWS survey: Fewer families say they're poor

FEWER FILIPINO families now consider themselves "poor," according to a recent survey of the Social Weather Stations.

While nearly one in every two Filipino families (47 percent)—equivalent to roughly 3.8 million households nationwide—still consider themselves poor, this was lower than the 53 percent (over 4.2 million households) who considered themselves poor in the last survey, according to the Second Quarter 2007 Social Weather Survey.

The survey was conducted in June and the results released in an SWS statement yesterday. The last SWS quarterly survey was done in February.

Geographically, self-rated poverty was 52 percent in the Visayas, 49 percent in Mindanao, 47 percent in the rest of Luzon and 36 percent in Metro Manila—lower than in the previous three quarters.

Belt-tightening

It was also lower at 41 percent in urban areas and at 54 percent in rural areas.

"From March 2005 to February 2007, urban poverty was between 46 percent to 56 percent, and rural poverty was between 49 percent to 64 percent," SWS said in a statement.

SWS said the decline occurred "in the context of a lowering of families' living standards," meaning Filipino families have been tightening their belts.

The National Statistical Coordination Board places the official poverty threshold nationwide at P6,195 a month. The amount is what a Filipino family of five would need to meet its most basic food and non-food necessities for the year.

The survey defined the "self-rated poverty threshold" as the monthly budget that poor households say they would need in order not to be considered poor.

The SWS said the self-rated poverty threshold had actually fallen in money terms despite the steady increase in the cost of living.

Lower standards

"A declining poverty threshold, despite rising cost of living, means that households are lowering their living standards," SWS said.

The survey, directed at household heads, showed the respondents a card that contained the words "Not poor," "On the line" and "Poor." They were asked where they would place their family given the choices.

Those who answered "poor" were then asked, "How much money would your family need for home expenses each month in order not to be called poor anymore?"

Among poor households in Metro Manila, the median poverty threshold was only P9,000, even as it had gone up to as much as P15,000 several times in the past.

For Luzon outside Metro Manila, the threshold had ranged from P5,000 to P7,000 in the past two years, while it reached as high as P10,000 in earlier years.

In the Visayas, the threshold has been at P6,000 for the past year, even as it had reached P10,000 previously. In Mindanao, the threshold is currently at P4,000, but reached P10,000 in the past.

Deflated poverty

In 2000, the median poverty threshold for Metro Manila was P10,000, which would be equivalent today to P14,380 a month, using June 2007 cost of living standards.

"The difference of … P5,380 between the thresholds of 2000 and June 2007 [P14,380 minus P9,000] measures the extent of belt-tightening that took place," SWS said.

"The last time the deflated poverty threshold for [Metro Manila] was below P7,000 per month was 20 years ago, in 1987," SWS said.

The survey was conducted from June 27 to June 30 using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adults divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. It had a margin of error of plus-minus 3 percentage points. SWS said the survey was done on its own initiative. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 22, 2007
Queenship of Mary

1st Reading: Isaiah 9:1-6
Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth. He was sent to a young virgin who was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the family of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Rejoice, full of grace, the Lord is with you." Mary was troubled at these words, wondering what this greeting could mean.

But the angel said, "Do not fear, Mary, for God has looked kindly on you. You shall conceive and bear a son and you shall call him Jesus. He will be great and shall rightly be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the kingdom of David, his ancestor; he will rule over the people of Jacob forever and his reign shall have no end."

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be if I am a virgin?" And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the holy child to be born shall be called Son of God. Even your relative Elizabeth is expecting a son in her old age, although she was unable to have a child, and she is now in her sixth month. With God nothing is impossible."

Then Mary said, "I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said." And the angel left her.

Commentary

The child born of Mary is the child of light, the shattering of death, the presence of joy in living. He is the dawn of a new creation where there is no slavery or oppression, no hunger and want. There is no more war, for the child is the Peace of God, dwelling with us forever. His kingdom is one of justice, community, righteousness, and zeal for the glory of the Lord. It is the Father's kingdom for all peoples, the beloved children of God.

If there is a queen in this kingdom, then she is the least of the least, poorest with the poor, nobody from nowhere, anonymous among the masses of the world's people who hunger for justice, seek peace, hope for their children's future and the basic necessities of life. People have what they need, there is no war and the light of the world is the Son of Justice. We are all called to obey the Word of the Lord and let God's will be done in us and we are to live as the royalty of God together.

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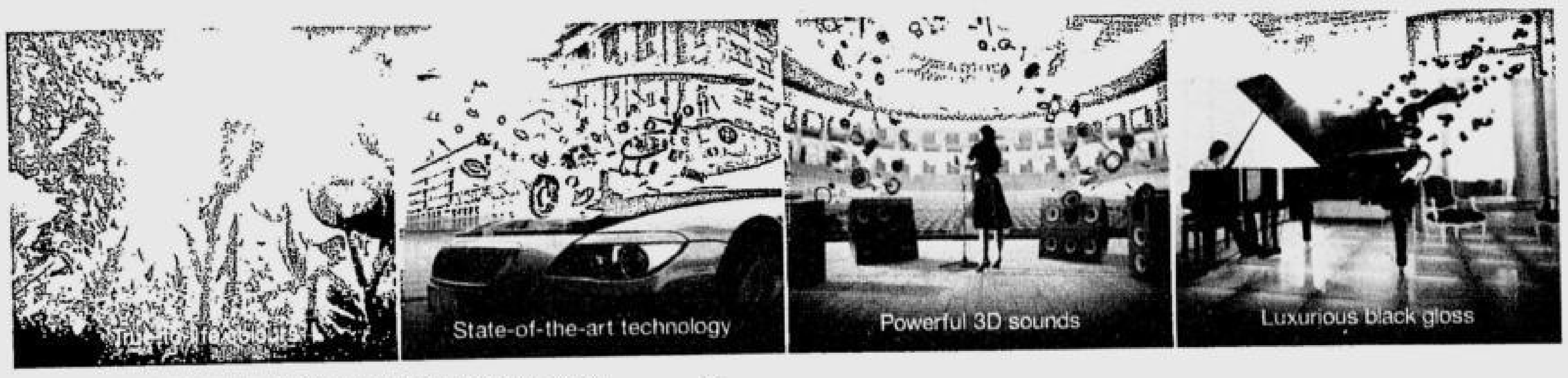

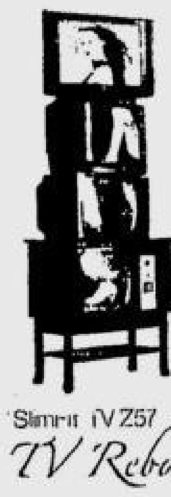

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Jpepa is all right, DOJ rules

By Leila B. Salaverria

BRUSHING OFF FEARS OF ENvironmental degradation, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday said there was no legal impediment to the implementation of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa).

Gonzalez said the agreement states the parties would honor each other's environmental laws and commitments to international treaties that prevent commerce in toxic waste.

Hence, the agreement was valid, he said.

"Since the Jpepa recognizes 'the measures of the governments of the parties in accordance with their respective laws and regulations,' it is clear the notion the Philippines would become a dumping ground for Japan's toxic waste is baseless. We have a law, Republic Act No. 6969, that prohibits the importation of hazardous and nuclear waste into the country," Gonzalez said in a memorandum to President Macapagal-Arroyo dated Aug. 14.

Gonzalez told reporters yesterday that if the Jpepa proved harmful to the country, "we could always abrogate [it]."

The Seattle-based Basel Action Network, a network of environmental activists, earlier said the Jpepa should be rejected because it lists toxic waste as among the items that could be brought into the Philippines.

Congress has yet to ratify the treaty.

The Jpepa would also improve relations between the Philippines and Japan, Gonzalez said.

"This could translate to aid. We are depending more on Japan and China now for our infrastructure," he said.

In his memorandum, Gonzalez pointed out the Jpepa's preamble upheld the importance of implementing measures in accordance with the parties' laws and regulations, while another article bound the parties to agree to uphold their rights and obligations under the World Trade Organization and other agreements.

He also noted that the Philippines and Japan were parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, which prohibits the export of hazardous and other waste to a party state to the convention, especially if the state was a developing country.

The exchange of letters between Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs Taro Aso and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo also reaffirmed Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's assurance to President Arroyo that his country would not export toxic waste to the Philippines, Gonzalez said.

The Jpepa, being a bilateral free trade agreement, also allows Ms Arroyo not to implement its provisions in specific circumstances by invoking general or security exceptions, Gonzalez said.

"Said provisions, in effect, give the parties the authority to take measures they consider necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health... subject only to the requirement that such measures are not applied in a manner that would constitute a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination against the other party," he said.

He also pointed to Article 102, Chapter 8 of the Jpepa which states that the parties could deem it inappropriate to encourage investment in each other's country by relaxing environmental measures.

Gonzalez issued the memorandum in response to a directive by the President.

Julia's mother recalls her in testimony

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAGAWE, IFUGAO—LINDA Campbell occasionally smiled, then tried to hold back the tears as she described her daughter Julia and how she had given up a promising career in journalism in the United States to come to the Philippines as a peace corps volunteer.

Campbell of Fairfax, Virginia, was the first witness presented by the prosecution at the start of the trial yesterday oft a young woodcarver accused of bludgeoning her 40-year-old daughter to death on April 8 as she hiked down a ridge to view the famed Banawe rice terraces. Her body was found on April 18 in a shallow hillside grave near Batad.

The suspect, 25-year-old Juan Donald Duntugan, listened intently but showed no emotion.

Julia's elder sister, Geary Campbell-Morris, 42, took a seat in the front row and sobbed as her mother detailed in her 45-minute testimony how she and her family were devastated by the loss of Julia.

"It was like someone had ripped my heart," said Linda, describing how she felt the day she got the news.

If not for her death, Linda said Julia would have taken up a scholarship at the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University.

Aside from her Geary, Linda was accompanied to court by Carl Beck, director of the Peace Corps in the Philippines, and US Embassy officials.

LINDA: My heart was ripped out.

Judge Esther Piscoso-Flor of the regional trial court here earlier heard Duntugan's plea 'of "not guilty" to the murder charge after the prosecution declined his offer, presented by defense lawyer Pedro Mayam-o, to plead guilty to the lesser offense of homicide.

Duntugan surrendered 10 days after Julia's body was found near his upland home and reportedly told police he had killed her in a fit of rage after he thought she was a bully in his village.

Linda said she learned on April 11 that her daughter had been missing since April 8. Then, shortly before midnight on April 18, Geary received a phone call from Jon Sanders of the US Peace Corps in Washington D.C. relaying the news of Julia's death.

Her husband, William Jr., was stunned, Linda said.

"Then, (the entire family) gathered upstairs. We cried, we hugged and prayed," she said. "My whole being was affected. I could not sleep, I could not concentrate [on what I was doing]."

Lawyer Reynaldo Agranzamendez, lead counsel for the prosecution, said he called on Linda to testify to show the gravity of the family's loss and how they suffered as a result of Julia's death should the court require Duntugan to indemnify them.

Linda said she takes heart in remembering how her daughter was loved by the people she served in Albay. The children called her "Ate Julia" or "Mommy Julia," she said. *With a report from Vincent Cabreza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Erap asks to visit hospitalized ma

DETAINED FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada has asked the Sandiganbayan to allow him to visit his ailing mother as soon as possible. Mary Ejercito, 102, has been confined in a hospital for the last 12 days.

Through his lawyer, Rene Saguisag, Estrada informed the antigraft court's Special Division yesterday that his mother has been confined at the San Juan Medical Center since Aug. 10 due to a fever and cough.

He said he was informed by the family's doctor, Lorenzo Hocson, on Monday that Ejercito, who was diagnosed with pneumonia and hypertension, had difficulty breathing and had to be connected to a respirator.

"Her condition is quite unstable at the moment," Hocson said.

Saguisag pointed out it was the first time Estrada's mother had been confined in a hospital for a long period. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

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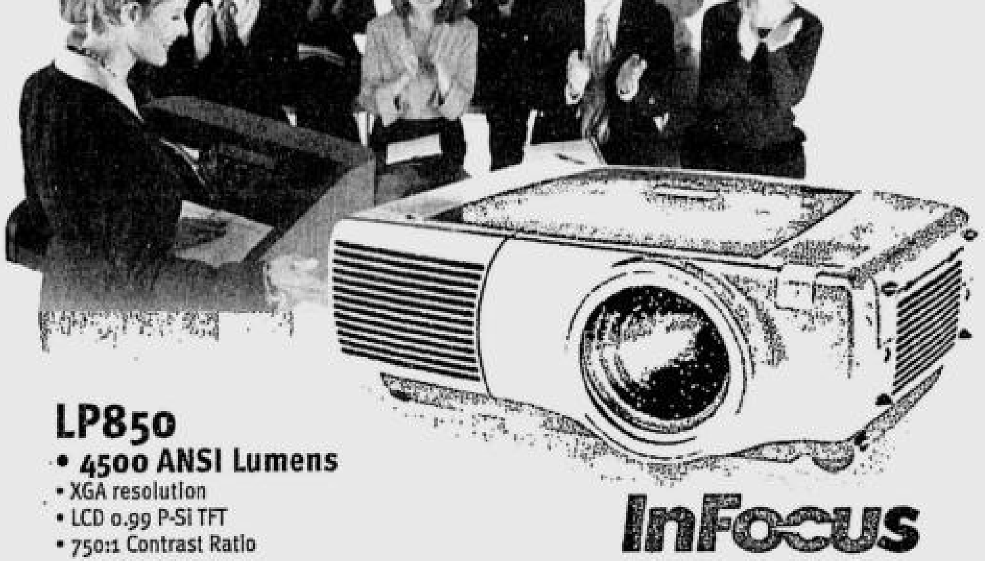

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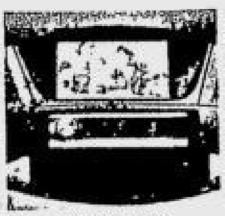

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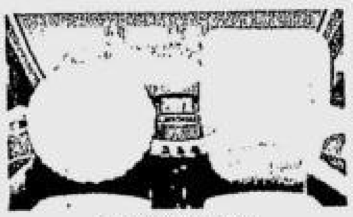

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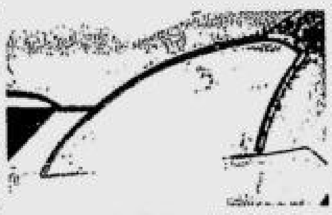

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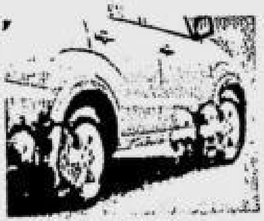

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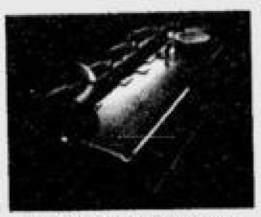

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Advice to lovelorn: You'll survive

From page A1

Finkel and colleague Paul Eastwick studied young lovers—especially those who profess ardent affection—to see if their predictions of devastation matched their actual angst when that love was lost.

"On average, people overestimate how distressed they will be following a breakup," Finkel said in a telephone interview.

The nine-month study involved college students who had been dating at least two months and who filled out questionnaires every two weeks.

Finkel and Eastwick gathered data from 26 people—10 women and 16 men—who broke up with their partners during the first six months of the study.

The participants' forecasts of distress two weeks before the breakup were compared to their actual experience as recorded over four different periods of time.

Not surprisingly, the researchers found that the more people were in love, the harder they took the breakup.

"People who are more in love really are a little more upset after a breakup, but their perceptions about how distraught they will be are dramatically overstated when compared to reality," Finkel said.

"At the end of the day, it is just less bad than you thought." *Reuters*

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14 hurt in Zamboanga City blast

ZAMBOANGA CITY—FOURTEEN people were wounded when a bomb placed under a park bench exploded at Plaza Pershing here last night.

The 7:30 p.m. blast occurred while authorities were on full alert against possible attacks by the Abu Sayyaf group in the face of the military offensive in Basilan and Sulu.

Senior Supt. Manuel Barcena, city police chief, said the explosive was placed under a concrete bench in the park.

The wounded were brought to the Zamboanga City Medical Center. Hospital director Dr. Romeo Ong said the victims suffered minor injuries from splinters. *Julie S. Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao*

Nepalese teacher brings …

From page A1

was realized. Nangi became one of the dozen villages linked to a single wireless network and enjoying the ability to communicate from a distance.

For his efforts, Pun is this year's recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership.

This is the story of how Pun got his wireless network:

One day in late 1992, a man in his mid-thirties arrived in the Nepalese village of Nangi. That's not necessarily unusual. Tourists have flocked to Nepal for decades, inspired in part by its connection to the fabled paradise Shangri-La.

Still, Nangi isn't exactly easily accessible. The Himanchal Education Foundation's website says that from the international airport in the capital city of Kathmandu, it's seven hours by bus (or a half-hour by plane) to Pokhara City, followed by a five-hour trip by car to the nearest major town (Beni), and finally a nine-hour hike to Nangi.

As Pun himself told BBC News in 2001: "If we walk about six or seven hours outward in any direction from our village and ask the people where Nangi is, most of [them] will have no idea."

Prodigal son

The stranger in Nangi turned out to be Pun. His family had left the village nearly 25 years earlier and moved to Chitwan so that Pun and his siblings could attend school. At the time, Nangi only had a grade school and a middle school.

But Pun's father, a former soldier in the British Army, wanted more for his children. After graduating from high school, Pun opted to become a teacher himself to help finance his siblings' education. For a dozen years, he taught in Chitwan. In 1988, he received a scholarship at Kearney State College.

Four years later, Pun graduated from the University of Nebraska at Kearney (or UNK; the college became part of the state university system the year before) with a degree in education and went home.

After reacquainting himself with Nangi and its people, Pun set about trying to figure out what he could do for the village.

"What I saw as my first simple observation," he wrote on the Himanchal Education Foundation's website, "was that most of the remote areas of Nepal have been forgotten just because nobody ever thought about the place and the people living there. On the other hand, the people living in the remote areas have no ideas how to seek help, or whether any help is available."

Pun became the local high school teacher for Himanchal High School that had been built during his absence.

Living in US not superior option

For three years, he taught every subject and made the monthly journey to Pokhara to check his e-mail. "It's hard living on the mountain. Walking several hours up and down is hard," Pun conceded in a short video done last year to introduce the nominees of the Ramon Magsaysay Awards.

He said staying in America was not really a superior option. "You can make money there," he noted. "And it's not better life, it's a hard life there. But I'm not forced to do whatever I don't want to do."

In 1997, students at an Australian school donated some computers to Himanchal High School. Pun wanted to have his students e-mail the Australian students back, but there were no telephone lines in Nangi that the students could use to connect to the Internet. The village was too remote to have any regular phone lines, and the radio phone that Nangi had was unreliable.

Pun decided to ask for help on behalf of Nangi.

Big dreams

Leonard Skov, former dean of the UNK College of Education and someone who's known Pun since 1988, described the Nepalese teacher as "a visionary with big thoughts and dreams."

From Pun, Skov said, "I have learned that it does not take a huge financial commitment or a huge project to make a significant difference in rural Nepal. Some of the most successful and high impact activities have been started and maintained with very little resources."

E-mails pay off

Pun went back down to Pokhara and started sending out e-mail asking for advice in setting up a cheap Internet connection in Nangi. He left the village briefly in 1999 and went back to his alma mater, this time to get a master's degree in education administration.

Still, he kept e-mailing. In 2001, the BBC responded to one of his messages, interviewed him, and wrote about his quest. The Internet access project snowballed from there.

E-mails arrived in Pun's inbox, introducing him to the notion of wireless access networks. The following year, two European strangers showed up in Nangi with wireless cards from IBM Finland and helped Pun set up a small-scale version of what he had been reading about.

In 2003, a college student at the University of California at Los Angeles heard about the project from a friend who had gone to Nangi. The student got in touch with Pun, then applied for and received a grant to buy the needed equipment, including batteries and solar panels to power the units, to set up the wireless network.

Volunteers from all over the world were appearing in the village with startling regularity by then, bringing information, time, and electronic parts.

Good lesson to learn

By the end of 2003, Nangi had limited Internet access, connecting to Pokhara's Internet service provider by means of several satellite antenna relays. Not only was Nangi finally known to the world, Pun was likewise able to check his e-mail from the village.

"Significant achievements are rarely the result of some big project," noted Skov, a staunch supporter of Pun's plan to improve the lives of the rural Nepalese.

"Rather, they seem to evolve from many small activities. This is a good lesson for all of us," said Skov, who serves as treasurer of the Himanchal Education Foundation, a nonprofit corporation he had started with a number of UNK professors.

In the last four years, Internet access and a US$20,000 grant from the World Bank have changed Nangi and the neighboring villages.

Computer courses have taught villagers how to use the computers, maintain the wireless networks, and surf the Web. Doctors in Pokhara hold audio and video conferences with remote villages to discuss cases and treatments.

Tele-teaching allows students to have classes without a teacher being physically present. Tourism has also come to Nangi, adding to the village income.

And of course, the Internet allows the villagers to keep in touch with their friends and families around the world. Students can now e-mail their friends, and the villagers can talk to distant family members through VOiP, an Internet service that lets the computer act as a telephone.

Alternative options

Now the villagers of Nangi are dreaming about giving their children further schooling and other job prospects apart from that offered by the military.

Skov mentioned plans to improve training methods for quality control and to someday build a college in rural Nepal. Himself part of a generation where joining the Army was the way to make a living, Pun is pleased to have provided alternative options to younger villagers.

"My dream a long time ago to go to a university was shattered due to financial restraints, and this created another dream," he wrote on his webpage.

"To provide educational opportunities for the rural children so that they should not have to go through all the pain and struggle I went through. I've had a first-hand experience of how much it hurts to go through that kind of pain."

Boyish charm

In person, Pun smiles a lot, with a boyish charm that engages the listener. Though he can't deny being the primary force behind Nangi's progress, he says he's not really in charge.

"I went to my village not to be a leader but to work as a volunteer," he noted on his webpage. "The mountain environment and villages belong to the villagers who constitute over 80 percent of Nepal's population. Therefore, the efforts for solving their problems should be tried by themselves from the very area."

Most people have to leave home to find fame and fortune. Pun went home to find both.

"Before I went to America, I told myself, 'If I change [my] mind, I'll come back to Nepal and I'll do something else,'" he said in an interview last year. "And I didn't know what, but I'll do something. But I found something to do here and so I decided to stay here."

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Seminar Room 1
August 23, 2007
10:00 - 11:00pm Simplifying Design with Autodesk Inventor by: A&A and Vector Data, Inc
2:00 - 3:00pm Redefining CAD with functional design from: 2d to 3d by: CIM Technologies
3:30 - 4:30pm Local World-Class "Calibration – Here in the Philippines" by: Micropecision Calibration Philippines
August 24, 2007
2:00 – 4:30pm Optimizing Tool Life Through Correct Heat Treatment by: ASSAB
3:30 – 4:30pm Material Selection - by: Penta Technological Products Inc.
August 25, 2007
2:00 – 3:00pm CAD Presentation- by: Technologix, Inc.

Seminar Room 2
August 23, 2007
12:30 - 1:30pm Energy Conservation of Compressor Air / Exhausted Air Recycling System- by: New Achievers Marketing
3:30 - 4:30pm Increase in Revenue, Reduction in cost using Objet Rapid Prototyping- by: BigPix Graphics (Objet Division)
August 24, 2007
10:00- 11:00pm Energy Conservation of Compressor Air / Exhausted Air Recycling System- by: New Achievers Marketing
2:00 – 3:00pm Philips Energy Savings by: Transpo Sales
3:30 - 4:30pm Economics of Metal Working Fluid (The Castrol Liquid Engineering) by: Bon Industrial Sales
August 25, 2007
10:00- 11:00pm Energy Conservation of Compressor Air / Exhausted Air Recycling System - by: New Achievers Marketing
2:00 – 3:00pm Introducing the New Technology of Pneumatic Item from Sumitomo Japan - by: Back Je Philippines

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Singaporeans bag P200-M textbook deal

By Jerry E. Esplanada

A SINGAPOREAN FIRM HAS BAGGED A P200-million contract to print English textbooks for public elementary and secondary schools nationwide, Education Secretary Jesli A. Lapus has announced.

Alkem Company (S) Private Ltd. "won one of the four lots that were bid out (in May)," Lapus said in an interview.

The World Bank was "on top of this," Lapus said. Which is why, he added, "*hindi dapat pagdudahan* (it should not be doubted)."

The Department of Education "will repeat the bidding for the failed lots (worth over P1 billion), but based on new bid documents... and new rules," Lapus said.

Alkem won DepEd textbook deals in 2002 and 2003 worth P413,877,675.60 and P292,863,850.36, respectively.

Lapus said local companies like Vibal Publishing House Inc. and Rex Bookstore, as well as Vibal's supposed foreign partner, Watana Phanit Printing & Publishing Co. Ltd. of Thailand, failed to garner any of the lots.

"They were disqualified for many reasons, like noncompliance with (bid) documents," among other things, Lapus said.

Earlier, Lapus had told the INQUIRER that "from 25 in the pre-bid, only 10 submitted bid documents."

"From the 10, (the World Bank and DepEd) checked out those that were compliant and responsive... This is a simple printing contract. The textbook content is a different matter... This is a World Bank-funded, World Bank-supervised international competitive bidding," he said.

The other failed bidders were Book Media Press Inc., D'Alco Printers, Main Choice International Development Ltd., Pitambra Books Private Ltd., Tan Prints (India) Private Ltd. and Thomson Asia Private Ltd.

Top contractor is Thai

With over P906 million worth of contracts received from the DepEd in the last eight years, Alkem is currently in third place (on the department's list of suppliers of textbooks and other instructional materials).

Watana Phanit tops the list with contracts totaling more than P1.42 billion, according to DepEd documents furnished this paper.

The Thai firm has cornered 24 out of 109 contracts, according to records of the agency's Instructional Materials Council Secretariat (IMCS).

In the meantime, the DepEd National Employees Union, the militant Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) and the Philippine Public School Teachers Association have challenged Lapus anew to break the alleged textbook cartel that corners most of the textbook contracts.

The groups assailed Lapus and his predecessors for "looking the other way" and letting the cartel thrive.

On hearing of the groups' challenge, Lapus assailed the critics of the DepEd, particularly those who were in previous administrations, saying "they are the ones who should apologize."

"Why? All the (textbook) errors happened during their watch," he said.

Antonio Tinio, chair of the 15,000-strong ACT, said the DepEd's "centralized procurement system" was to blame for the problem.

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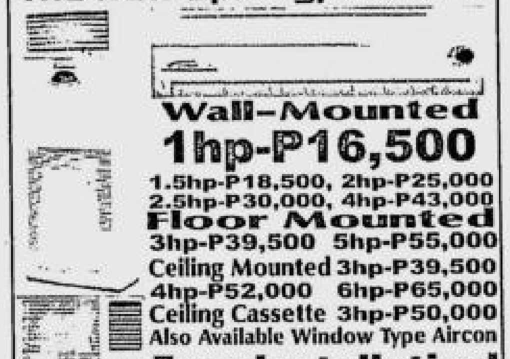

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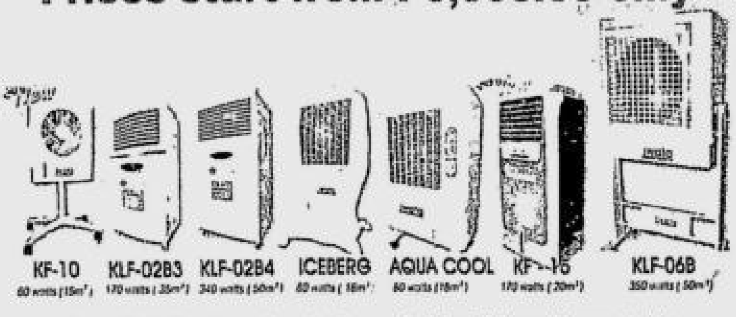

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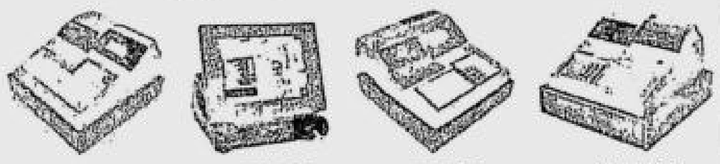

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Corrections

IN THE AUG. 20 ISSUE, a Lifestyle article on Page C2—"A blast from Tita King"—misstated the age of National Artist Lucresia Kasilag. She is turning 90—not 89—on Aug. 31.

* * *

THE SAME ARTICLE also misstated the surname of the dean of the Philippine Women's University School of Music. The dean is Harold Galang—not Galong.

* * *

IN LATER EDITIONS of the same issue, one of the sentences of a front-page article—"Changes at top too often"—should have read: "No one has stayed long enough at the DepEd to do a thorough job of cleaning up a veritable Augean"—not Aegean—"stables of Greek mythology."

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Noynoy sees similarity between GMA, Marcos

From page A1

Education Secretary Florencio Abad Jr. and Jonas' mother, the widow of press freedom fighter Jose Burgos.

Nevertheless, the Senate formally acknowledged Corazon Aquino's presence while commemorating Ninoy Aquino's death.

Noynoy Aquino's father was also a senator when Marcos declared martial law in 1972, abolished Congress and curtailed civil liberties.

VERY IMPORTANT VICTIMS: Refusing a seat in the VIP Senate gallery to listen to her son Noynoy deliver his first privilege speech, ex-President Cory Aquino chooses to sit beside Edita Burgos to bring home the point that they are both victims of extrajudicial killings though from different times. ROGER MARGALLO

Uncaring, incompetent

The older Aquino was shot dead on the tarmac of what is now the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, while in the custody of soldiers as he returned from US exile on Aug. 21, 1983, to challenge the dictatorship.

"The attitude that this administration has adopted in the Jonas Burgos case and, indeed, on the entire issue of political killings and disappearances—compliant at worst, uncaring and incompetent at the very least—bears a chilling similarity to the [attitude of the] authorities that stood by, watched and did nothing as my father was murdered," Aquino said.

He cited research conducted by political scientist Alfred McCoy, who estimated that there were at least 3,257 victims of political killings during martial law. Some 2,520 of the victims were summarily executed while the rest remain unaccounted for and are presumed dead.

Burden of responsibility

Senator Aquino then cited statistics from some human rights groups—which became the subject of an investigation by the United Nations—showing that more than 800 activists, leftist leaders, journalists, lawyers and judges had been summarily executed since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001.

"The rights restored by Ninoy Aquino's sacrifice, and that of many nameless others, come with the burden of responsibility to uphold and protect the same, especially when they are threatened by the very institutions that are mandated to protect and preserve them," Aquino said.

"It is because of this responsibility that we, who now enjoy these rights and freedoms, should refuse to accept that the restoration of democracy, however incomplete it might yet be, has failed the likes of Jonas and Edita Burgos," he said.

Ninoy Aquino's assassination—for which 16 soldiers of Marcos were eventually convicted and sentenced to life in prison—stirred massive public outrage that led to the ousting of the 20-year Marcos dictatorship through the 1986 Edsa People Power revolt.

Search for mastermind

Despite two fact-finding commissions and two trials, the mastermind of the murder has not been exposed to this day.

Talking briefly with reporters, Ms Aquino said the jailed soldiers could provide a "closure" to the assassination of her husband by spilling the beans on who the mastermind was.

Support for SC proposals

In his speech, Senator Aquino urged his colleagues to throw their full support behind the recommendations reached by the Supreme Court's landmark national consultative summit on extrajudicial killings last month.

These recommendations include defining "extrajudicial killing" through legislation; passing a law allowing searches of missing persons in military camps; and having separate rules for the writ of habeas corpus for cases of extrajudicial killings and for disappearances.

"My father died to bring democracy back to life in our country. It was the highest possible price anyone could have paid," said Aquino.

"It is now up to us to make the institutions of democracy work for our citizens, so that never again should any person's life be sacrificed in the name of his beliefs."

GMA skips Mass for Aquino

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo skipped the commemoration yesterday of the 24th death anniversary of Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. because of pressing issues in Mindanao but her image director said the hero was very much on her mind.

Ms Arroyo has not shown up at a Ninoy Aquino event together with former President Corazon Aquino since the widow called for her resignation at the height of the "Hello Garci" scandal in 2005.

Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara, Ninoy's younger sister who is serving as Ms Arroyo's image director, said the President told her she was preoccupied with the problem in Mindanao.

"I'm focusing on the Cabinet (meeting) today," Kashiwahara quoted Ms Arroyo as saying.

Kashiwahara said she understood Ms Arroyo's hectic schedule and would not put color on Ms Arroyo's absence at the commemoration rites.

"She's very busy, Tuesday is a sacred day for her. It's the Cabinet meeting (day)," Kashiwahara said in a phone interview. "So she's very focused on her work," she said.

If Ninoy had come home to cheers …

From page A1

military escorts and he was able to resume his political battle against the Marcos dictatorship?

Two of Aquino's political contemporaries suggested that the struggle for Philippine democracy might have taken a longer, rougher path, not necessarily leading to something as glorious as the 1986 People Power revolution, had Aug. 21, 1983, merely marked a politician's homecoming and not a hero's murder.

A darker scenario was offered by a noted educator who has actively espoused Aquino's legacy among the youth: The country might have fallen under a military junta had Ninoy lived on without successfully leading ouster moves against then President Ferdinand Marcos.

Fall of Marcos

The fall of Marcos could still have happened, but only "much later," according to former Senate President Jovito Salonga, one of Aquino's senior colleagues in the pre-martial law Liberal Party.

Salonga said "(Ninoy) expected that he would be imprisoned again" in Fort Bonifacio but "he also expected that Marcos will call him out" for help in solving the communist insurgency and the Moro separatist movement.

Salonga said Aquino also told him that he expected Marcos to release him from detention and allow the restoration of democracy on the condition that the dictator and his family leave the country with their wealth.

Aquino, however, still didn't know at the time that the Marcoses had already been "hiding their wealth abroad . . . as early as 1968," he added.

Power struggle

Upon Aquino's return, the political opposition expected a power struggle within its ranks.

With apparent frankness, Salonga said he didn't think Aquino would have been allowed by the LP at that time to take on the party leadership due to his earlier idea of reconciliation with the dictator.

But for Sen. Joker Arroyo, a human rights lawyer during the Marcos dictatorship and one of the opposition leaders waiting for Aquino at the airport in August 1983, Ninoy would have readily taken on the leadership of the opposition when he came home.

Arroyo said the Marcos regime was already teetering on the edge in 1983 because of the economic crisis.

Aquino's assassination, he said, hastened the dictatorship's fall.

He allowed Ninoy's death

"Marcos' problem at that time was more financial than political. Our economy was in tatters. We could not pay our foreign debts. In fact, we defaulted on our payments," Arroyo said.

He said Aquino and Marcos knew what the other was thinking and calibrated their moves vis-à-vis the political and economic situation.

"Both Ninoy and Marcos knew and understood this only too well. In that deathly situation, there lies Ninoy's greatness and Marcos' folly," Arroyo told the Inquirer. "Faced with certain death, Ninoy braved coming home. Marcos allowed [Ninoy's death]."

Former De La Salle University president Bro. Rolando Dizon, who in 2003 launched the Benigno Aquino Jr. Awards for Nationalism, answered the "what if" questions in broader strokes: "To a large extent, we owe him the freedom we enjoy today. We would still probably be under martial law [had Ninoy not returned and paid for the act with his life]."

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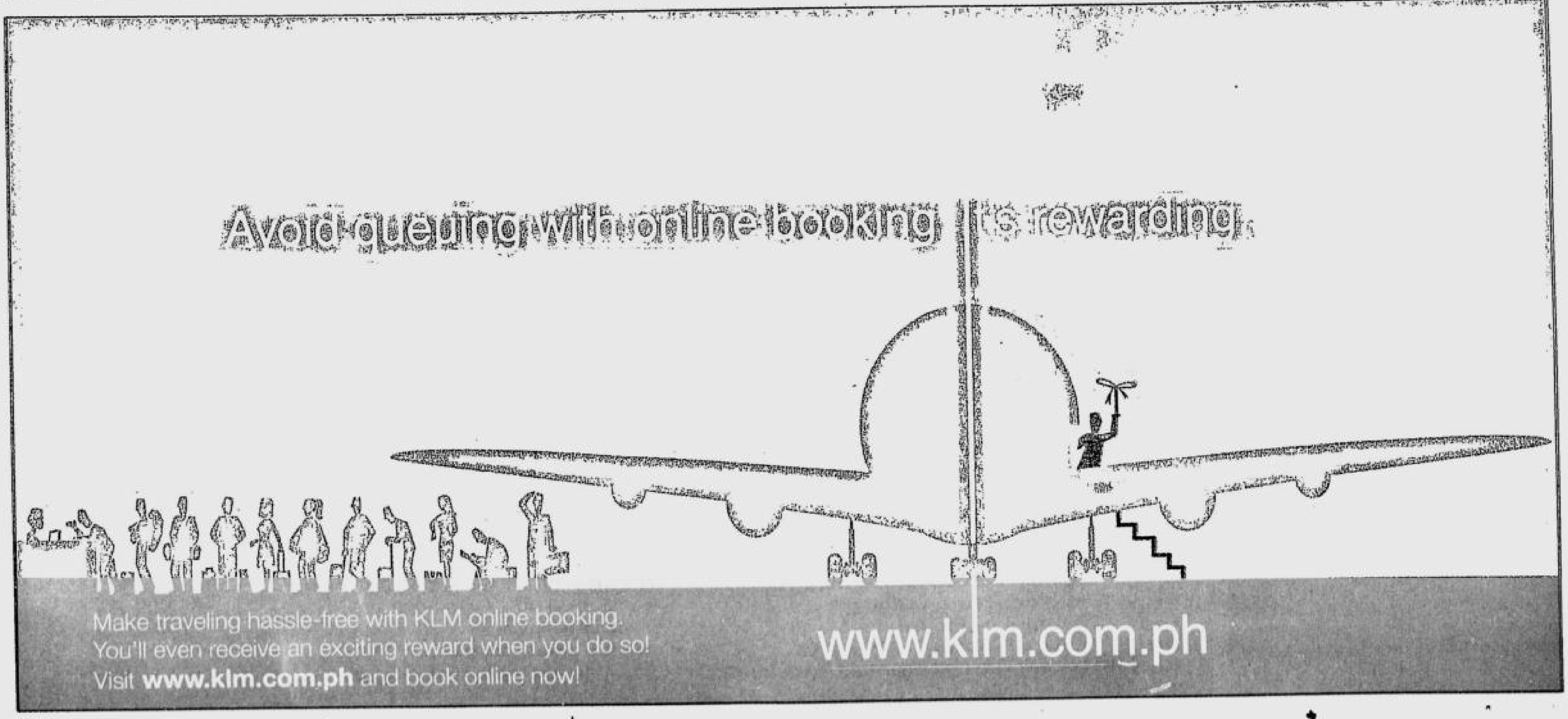

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Military van driver insists Galman shot Aquino

By Fe Zamora

ON THE EVE OF THE 24th DEATH ANNIVERSARY of Benigno Aquino Jr., the driver of the military van that carried the senator's bloodied body from the Manila international airport tarmac to the hospital reiterated his claim that he saw Rolando Galman shoot the senator.

In an interview, SPO4 Ruben Cantimbuhan also renewed his appeal to the government to "reopen the case" and "exert efforts" to bring to court former Air Force Capt. Felipe Valerio Jr., leader of the 10-man unit assigned to secure Aquino on his return from US exile on Aug. 21, 1983.

Cantimbuhan, who is now a member of the Philippine National Police Aviation Security Group, maintained that Valerio, then his immediate superior in the defunct Philippine Air Force's Aviation Security Command (Avsecom), "holds the key" to the case.

"He must know," Cantimbuhan said of Valerio, a 1974 graduate of the Philippine Military Academy.

Arrest warrant

Chief Public Attorney Persida Rueda-Acosta said a warrant of arrest was issued by the Sandiganbayan for Valerio on Nov. 11, 2005. She said the Department of Justice had also approved her motion for the government to have Valerio extradited from the United States.

"But the DOJ has not acted on the motion in the sense that it has not initiated the process," Acosta said.

According to her, Valerio had used the alias "Felipe Valeo" while working as a commercial pilot in Seattle, Washington.

Cantimbuhan said he last saw Valerio during the Sandiganbayan trial in 1985.

Cantimbuhan said he was seated inside the van with Valerio when he saw Galman "quickly pull out a gun and shoot Aquino." He said he escaped being charged in the conspiracy case because "I was negative for powder burns."

Baffling order

He said Valerio also gave orders that continue to baffle him to this day.

Leaving the tarmac with the body of Aquino, Cantimbuhan said an Air Force general stopped the van at the gate of Villamor Air Base, and signaled to ask if Aquino was dead by "slicing his neck with his hand."

"He [Valerio] told me to return the signal, and the general gave a thumbs-up sign and allowed us to pass," Cantimbuhan said.

He said Valerio also instructed him to drive to the Philippine Army's Military Security Unit where the group waited for about 20 minutes for the signal to enter the compound. Denied entry to the MSU, Valerio then ordered him to drive to the Army hospital.

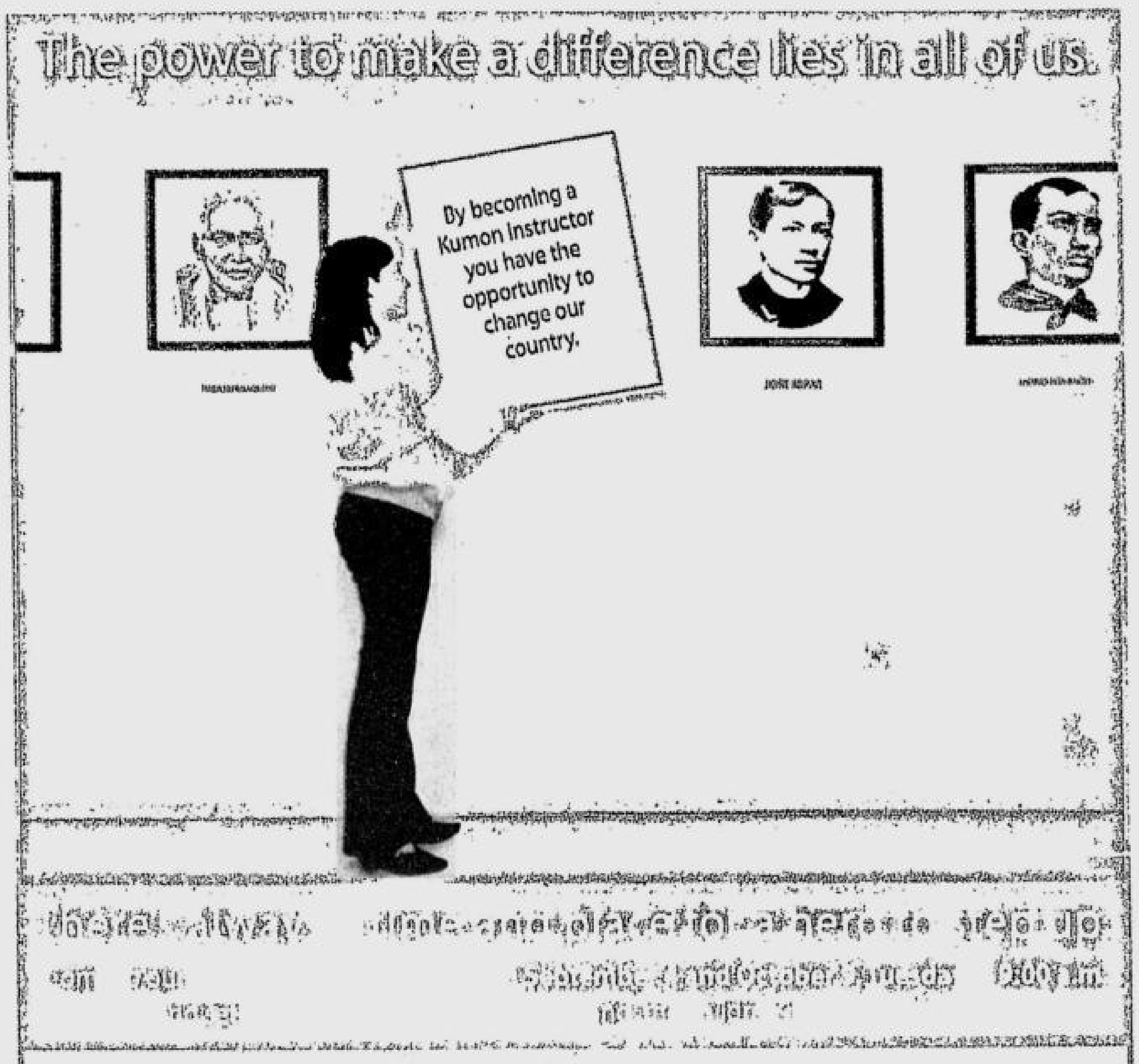
"Why did Valerio not order me to drive to the hospital in Villamor, which was nearer the tarmac? Why did we have to go to the MSU? But I was just a driver, so I just drove," Cantimbuhan said in Filipino.

'They congratulated us'

Later that night, Catimbuhan said AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian C. Ver, Metrocom chief Maj. Gen. Prospero Olivas, then chief of the Metrocom and Avsecom chief Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio paid a surprise visit to the Avsecom office. "They congratulated us for a job well done," he said.

Cantimbuhan also said he decided to come out with his story to help clear the names of his colleagues who were convicted for the murder of Aquino.

"They are already old, I will retire next year," he added.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Issue of closure splits Ninoy kin

From page A1

what happened on Aug. 21, 1983.

Aquino was shot with a single bullet fired to the back of his head moments after he disembarked from a China Airlines jet escorted by soldiers on his return from three years of self-exile in the United States to mobilize the fractured opposition against Marcos.

"In my view, the real mastermind has been punished," the senator said without naming his main suspect, Marcos. "He's not only dead, but the last years of his life, how he lived ... I can't really say I'm really contented now but he's dead."

Aquino's younger brother Agapito, 68, agreed with Narvasa, who told the INQUIRER on Monday that there was no direct evidence to link Marcos or the other prime suspect, the late Gen. Fabian Ver, his Armed Forces chief of staff, to the murder.

"We may not know exactly who was the mastermind but we still have our own deep-seated conclusions wherein it couldn't have happened without the consent of FM," said the former movie actor, senator and congressman, using Marcos' initials.

No complete justice

"We will not attain complete justice in this particular case. It's something that we have already accepted," he said. "The suspected principals are all dead. The involvement of all others are in the realm of speculation."

But Aquino's sister Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara disagreed.

"Before I die, I want to be able to complete in my mind what really happened," said Kashiwahara, now an aide to President Macapagal-Arroyo. "I'm not for closing the book. I am for still looking for the answers."

"Marcos may not have ordered the killing but he certainly created the atmosphere for what happened. Second, he was definitely guilty of the cover-up," Kashiwahara said. *With reports from Fe Zamora, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Juliet Labog-Javellana, Tarra Quismundo and Leila B. Salaverria, Norman Bordadora and Nikko Dizon*

Father Robert leads OFWs to honor Aquino

By Blanche Rivera

HONG KONG—WITH HOPES FOR A BETTER life running low among overseas Filipino workers here, a critic of the Arroyo administration led Filipinos in 24 minutes of prayer at the Philippine consulate to commemorate the 24th death anniversary of the late Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

Fr. Robert Reyes, known as the "running priest" when he was based in Manila, sought "grace" for the government to respond to 24 challenges hurled at the Arroyo administration.

The challenges included the welfare of OFWs, widespread corruption, extrajudicial killings, the all-out war in Mindanao, the massive brain drain and the welfare of local workers in the Philippines.

Reyes said his prayers amid the flurry of activities of domestic workers who were either renewing their contracts or passports, or paying fees.

He also gave out mongo seeds to the OFWs in the consulate to stress his point that they were the seeds planted in the fight for freedom waged by Aquino before he was assassinated in 1983.

Even as Reyes hailed Aquino as a hero whose death should continue to give people hope and a reason to dream for themselves and their country, he criticized local TV shows hosted by the late senator's youngest child, Kris Aquino.

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Impossible dream?

EDITORIAL

JUSTICE WAS ILL-SERVED WHEN RETIRED CHIEF Justice Andres Narvasa said the book on the assassination of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. should be closed. Narvasa said the commission in which he had worked—at times, to the extent that it irked the dictator Ferdinand Marcos—had already unearthed the truth or come as close to it as is humanly possible. That truth resulted in the conviction of some soldiers, but it never revealed who the mastermind was behind Ninoy's killing. No point in further trying to find out, Narvasa said.

Narvasa recalled that "the burning question at that time was whether it was President Marcos or the First Lady (Imelda Marcos)" who ordered the killing. He even recalled public suspicions concerning the alleged involvement of businessman Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr. in the murder. That question burns still. But Narvasa said, "I have to be frank there was no evidence pointing either way… There was no direct evidence. They remained speculations."

Today, even former President Corazon Aquino has publicly stated she wouldn't oppose executive clemency for the soldiers who have been convicted for the crime and who remain in jail. They were the only ones caught in the net of justice during her presidency. The late dictator himself died abroad and never ended up being deposed in court or properly investigated about the assassination. Gen. Fabian Ver, too, avoided the long arm of the law until the day he died.

And by 1992, the restoration of the disgraced and dispossessed leaders of the New Society had well and truly begun. It will be recalled that had Imelda Marcos and Cojuangco combined their forces, their combined votes would have defeated all other contenders for the presidency. As it was, their individual votes were remarkable and politically formidable. In a sense, it paved the way for the defeat of the Edsa 1 political forces with the election of an unrepentant Marcos loyalist, Joseph Estrada, to the vice presidency in 1992 and to the presidency in 1998.

We forget, too, the circumstances surrounding Ninoy Aquino's return home. Imelda Marcos had gone to see him. She issued a warning: there were people loyal to them and whom they could not control and they might kill him. She offered him financial inducements not to go home. He refused the offer.

And yet today Narvasa maintains, "Doña Imelda, I don't think was deeply involved … in such a dreadful thing. Maybe (she knows something) because she's the President's wife, she could not have been excluded from conversations by President Marcos." The record tells us the "something" she knew at the time was quite specific; and that her concern for Aquino could have been feigned. This certainly deserves further investigation, precisely because the dictator is dead.

Explaining his decision to come home, Aquino told his friends: "When we start to feel the pain of those who have been victimized by tyranny, it's only then we can liberate ourselves… The feeling right now is, 'Fred was tortured, thank God it's Fred, not me.' That's the tragic part. Society is atomized. Until the Filipino nation can feel the loss of one life as if it was their own, we'll never liberate ourselves."

Liberate ourselves we did; the rallying cry of those days was, "Justice for Aquino, Justice for All." It included demands for his killers to be exposed. That demand has only partially been fulfilled. Now Narvasa, who once zealously sought the truth, whatever the cost, thinks it's time to declare the quest ultimately defeated.

Were we to adopt Narvasa's suggestion, the ultimate lesson here would be the ultimate victory of the dictator's attitude toward the law: that style matters more than substance. Narvasa said the Narvasa Commission did its work, it filed its report and now the case "is finished, *functius oficio*." The paperwork may be done, but the case remains ultimately unresolved.

Ferdinand is dead, Imelda lives. Ver is dead, Cojuangco lives. At worst, half of the main suspects do not only remain alive, they are living within our shores instead of in exile. To borrow a thought from Ninoy, so long as his murder remains unsolved, until the public feels that the case has been pursued to its ultimate end, what hope is there that the ever-multiplying cases of political assassinations since then will ever be resolved, too?

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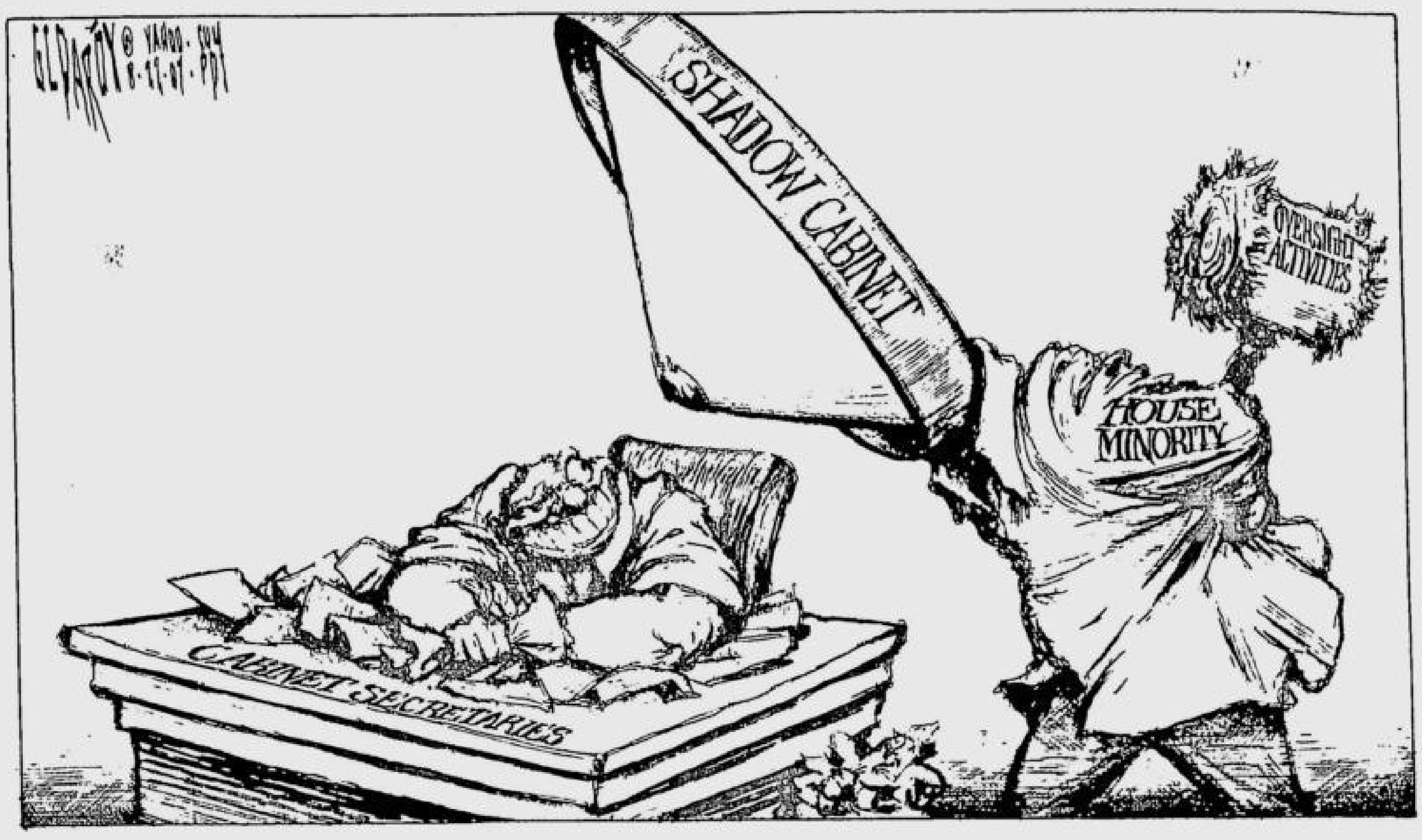

From a badge of shame to 30,000 homes

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE PRESS REPORTED SEVERAL DAYS AGO the Supreme Court decision declaring as valid the government's 1993 contract with R-II Builders Inc. (RBI) to turn the notorious Smokey Mountain dump into a low-cost housing and commercial area.

Smokey Mountain was the huge mound of garbage in Balut, Tondo. After years of dumping the garbage of Manila and neighboring cities and municipalities on it, the mound became so big it resembled a hill or a small mountain. Methane from decaying organic materials seeped up and the garbage deep within the hillocks began to burn. Smoke from this burning trash hovered like a dark cloud over the hundreds of scavengers gathering recyclable materials among the garbage. Sold to junk shops, they gave the poorest of the poor a meager income.

Newspaper photographs and television footage of the men, women and children poking and raking sticks on huge piles of smoldering trash were vividly etched in the minds of Filipinos and people around the world. It gave the outside world a graphic view of poverty, Philippine-style: gaunt human beings bent over mounds of trash, smoke swirling around them. It was like a mountain on fire, not unlike Moses' Mt. Sinai with the burning bush. Hence the name Smokey Mountain.

Smokey Mountain became a tourist spot. Tourists actually came to the Philippines to see this mound of smoldering trash that became so big it resembled a miniature mountain.

While it attracted foreigners, Smokey Mountain became a badge of shame for the Philippines, epitomizing the poverty, the powerlessness and despair of those struggling to keep body and soul together in a harsh urban environment. It became so shameful that President Corazon Aquino decided to wipe it off the face of the earth. She had the idea of turning this mound of trash, this badge of shame into a housing project for the thousands of scavengers who scraped a living out of it.

In 1992, she ordered the National Housing Authority to enter into a joint-venture agreement with R-II Builders of Reghis Romero to construct 30 buildings to house over 30,000 families in the area. The agreement stipulated that there would be no budget outlay from the government. R-II was to spend for the entire project. As compensation, R-II was to own 79 hectares of foreshore lands it would reclaim. The area was later increased to 229 hectares.

As the project would cost billions of pesos, R-II entered into an asset pool arrangement with a number of government financial institutions. In exchange for Smokey Mountain Participation Certificates, the Social Security System, Land Bank of the Philippines, Philippine National Bank, Home Guarantee Corp., HGC Provident Fund, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) and other financial institutions pooled assets totaling P3 billion to bankroll the project. These institutions later earned handsome profits from the certificates.

Still, the project ran out of money. In 2002, President Macapagal-Arroyo released P480 million to continue the project, on the condition that the contract with R-II would be cancelled. The original contract was terminated on Aug. 27, 2003. But the government promised to pay R-II P250 million to be taken from the P480 million fund to settle partially the expenses the developer had incurred.

In 2004, former Solicitor General Frank Chavez filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking to declare the original contract null and void. He raised a number of issues: that neither the NHA nor R-II may validly reclaim foreshore lands as these are inalienable public lands which are beyond the commerce of man; that there was never any declaration that the said lands were no longer needed for public use; that the developer could not acquire the lands because there was never any law authorizing the sale; that there was never any public bidding of the lands; and that R-II Builders, as a private corporation, was expressly prohibited by the Constitution to acquire lands of the public domain.

Last Aug. 13, the Supreme Court dismissed Chavez's petition and upheld the validity of the government contract with R-II. One by one, the Court demolished his arguments.

It said the NHA has the power to reclaim lands and transfer these to its private partner without public bidding.

It rejected Chavez's claim that only the Public Estates Authority (PEA) could reclaim submerged lands, saying EO 525 creating the PEA did not say this power was exclusive.

The second condition, the PEA's endorsement, was also present because its general manager was a member of the executive committee tasked to supervise the project's implementation.

The Court also junked Chavez's claim that the reclaimed lands were given by the NHA to R-II through a negotiated contract and not by public bidding as the law requires. It noted that R-II had won the right to become the NHA's partner for the project through public bidding.

It said that the lands that the NHA transferred to R-II were not lands of the public domain, the sale of which requires public bidding, and that the NHA was empowered to transfer properties it acquired to other parties, hence there was no need for a law to authorize the sale of reclaimed lands. It added the lands reclaimed for the Smokey Mountain project have been declared alienable and disposable by three presidential proclamations.

Debunking Chavez's claim that the Department of Environment and Natural Resources did not authorize the NHA and R-II to reclaim lands, the Court said the authority to do so came from the President, who has power over the DENR.

With the decision, R-II's project to construct homes for 30,000 Smokey Mountain families can now go full blast.

Sightings

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I NEVER REALLY BECAME A GREAT FAN OF Elvis; I caught him too early in life. I was 5 years old when he burst into the scene and half a decade later came the "British invasion" capped by the advent of the Beatles.

I do know a couple of people a few years older than me who grew up in the same place I did who know every Elvis song and movie and could win a trip to Las Vegas or Graceland in trivia contests on him.

I do recall as well during my early years in elementary school the toughies in our neighborhood sporting Elvis hairdo, repeatedly put back in place after the ravage of wind and physical exertion by a rapid motion of slapping the front of the hair forward and backward, wearing pants with the bottoms rolled up and polo shirts with the collars turned up. They spoke incoherently from the side of their mouths in what they imagined was an Elvis curl of the lip but which just set their faces in a perpetual snarl.

They drank gin in the corner store at night and sang to a guitar that seemed doomed to never be tuned right—the consequence of strings unchanged for ages, and but for constant use would have rusted ages ago and threatened to give their strummer tetanus—although their voices caught Elvis down pat. Sometimes they sang in the wee hours of evening (where I lived 10:30 p.m. was dead of night), with the frenetic energy (and loudness) of their idol, their favorite song, "Don't Be Cruel." Which was the not entirely unvoiced sentiment of many a parent who had to wake up early to bundle their kids off to school and to go to work themselves, in offices or at home, whichever was harder. "*Parang awa n'yo na!*" is not a bad translation of "Don't Be Cruel."

The Elvis worshippers called themselves cool. Everybody else called them punk. That was long before "punk" carried any shred of manic respectability.

I know I never got that deeply influenced by Elvis because I never sported the pompadour hair. I did, however, like my classmates, wear the moptop one some years later, which made my head, like those of my classmates, look like the top of a mop. We called the Elvis diehards passé, everybody else called us idiots.

I remembered these things last week with all the items in CNN, BBC and Yahoo about the celebration of Elvis' 30th death anniversary and the look-alikes that sprang out of the woodwork to vie in contests from Las Vegas to Las Palmas. There were some very interesting analyses of why Elvis continues to exert the kind of mania he does—he has made a lot more money dead than a lot of musicians alive—but also why he never achieved the kind of impact the Beatles did. The world remembers Elvis ferociously to this day, the world sings the Beatles tenaciously to this day. Those are two different things, the second clearly being the far superior achievement.

Frankly, I don't know how those analyses could have missed the most obvious answer to their question. It's true of course that the difference between Elvis and the Beatles is that Elvis did not compose his songs but only sang them, while John, Paul and George wrote and sang their own songs.

And it's even truer that Elvis' contribution to popular music was more to the popular than to the music: He pushed "devil's music" to angelic heights, making music that had animated the black soul—in more ways than one: it started out as Negro gospel music—accessible, and acceptable, to white ears. The Beatles' contribution was more to the music than to the popular, though they became the most popular band of all time. Their music has stood the test of time, sounding as fresh today as it did then. Why sing "Don't Be Cruel" when you can sing "Don't Let Me Down"?

And it's still even truer that with hindsight being 20-20 vision and history being freed from the shackles of bigotry and racism, Elvis' role in the birthing of rock-and-roll has lessened while correspondingly the role of black artists in it—Louis Jordan, Little Richard, Ray Charles, Chuck Berry and a host of others—has grown. Elvis may still be the King of Rock and Roll, but the question now is who crowned him so.

But the one thing that stared everyone in the face on the 30th anniversary of the King's death, and graphically answered the question of why he never quite made the same lasting impact as the Beatles, is the very horde of Elvis look-alikes or wannabes that crawled out of the woodwork to pay him homage. Most of them wore long sideburns, tight sequined shirts and pants (which showed off their pudgy middles), and looked ready to, well, do Las Vegas rather than do-ne'er-well. That isn't Elvis, that is a parody of Elvis. Or that is a parody of the parody of Elvis, the original parody being done by none other than Elvis himself.

That was the tragedy of the King, that he rose from pauper to king financially and turned from king to pauper musically. That the poor boy from Tupelo, Mississippi, who heard the gospel, blues and rhythm and blues from the cotton-pickers in the Delta and soaked it up like a sponge would later hear only the clink of coins and the clank of temptation and fall prey to it like a drunken fool. The iconoclasm would turn into protoplasm, the rebel would turn defender of the faith. "Jailhouse Rock" would turn to "Viva Las Vegas," Muddy Waters would turn to Hal Wallis, lean and hungry would turn to fat and sequined. The American Dream, the American Nightmare. Last week, I missed the *istambay* in my neighborhood singing, "Don't Be Cruel."

I myself have had an Elvis sighting—or hearing—in recent weeks. That was the sight and sound of Jim Liberan's boys from Tondo rapping about life in the very fast lane, or about life teetering on the razor's edge.

What can I say? The King is alive and well, but he ain't to be found in Graceland.

A laughable proposal

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE PROPOSAL FLOATED BY HOUSE DEPUTY Minority Leader Roilo Golez to form a "shadow Cabinet" that would "perform oversight activities" to checkmate a sitting government should have been greeted as a figment of a febrile imagination, but for the fact that it opens numerous possibilities for hilarious consequences.

Golez, who identifies himself with the notional "opposition," wants to be taken seriously as a lawmaker, after a spell in the Arroyo Cabinet as national security adviser. He is best remembered as the postmaster general of Ferdinand Marcos' martial law regime who vowed to deliver the mail in Metro Manila within one day, and succeeded. That sealed his reputation as one of the bright young Marcos technocrats who "got things done."

Now Golez seeks to bring the notion of getting things done to a perennially gridlocked and archaic Congress, saying: "The shadow Cabinet will perform oversight activities, as well as serve critical partners in crafting priority measures." Even his terminology—"shadow Cabinet"—is alien to the presidential system, which is built on the concept of checks and balances. The term is associated with the Westminster parliamentary system where the chamber of deputies (in the British system, the House of Commons) is divided between the government and opposition benches, the legislative and executive functions are fused in parliament and the Cabinet is the real seat of executive power. Implicit in this division of the house is a well-defined party system.

Golez's colleagues in the House do not understand what he is talking about. All they know is that dreadful and corny word to stand for opposition—"fiscalizer"—a badge of honor generations of Filipino politicians, including Benigno Aquino Jr. and Arturo Tolentino, have assiduously tried to earn as their eternal legacy to the rambunctious Philippine democracy.

I view Golez's rather revolutionary proposal from its operational aspects of renovating the presidential system. Golez does not say how the shadow Cabinet would work within the presidential system, without dismantling it and replacing the system with the parliamentary system, while essentially operating along the lines of the Westminster model.

Golez's concept implies the abolition of supporting structures of our presidential system and the existence of ideologically well-defined political parties, which can be classified into opposition or government parties and can be physically seated in parliament accordingly. Golez was, in effect, making an underhanded attack on the presidential system and a call for its replacement by stealth with the parliamentary system when he called for the formation of a shadow Cabinet.

In a 1994 speech in Manila, Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore shocked his Filipino audience with a scathing indictment of the Philippine presidential system, when he said: "The Philippines has an American-style Constitution, one of the most difficult to operate in the world. There is a complete separation of powers between the executive, legislature and judiciary… But a developing country faced with disorder and under-development needs a strong, honest government."

Earlier, he told Time magazine in an interview: "I don't see any of the Asian countries wanting to copy your gridlocked system. I am aghast to watch the Americans. My God, how did you survive 200-odd years of this? The one Asian country, namely the Philippines, that modeled itself on America has become a negative example."

Golez, in effect, seeks a short cut to install the parliamentary system without the benefit of constitutional amendment, by sneaking through the backdoor one of the key elements of the parliamentary system: a Cabinet headed by a prime minister chosen by elected members of parliament. His proposal also poses a challenge to Filipino ingenuity for makeshift political renovations.

A shadow Cabinet is such a renovation. Filipino commentators have vulgarized and trivialized the proposal by reducing it to an exercise of "shadowing" the sitting government, as though it were a basketball game, where man-to-man guarding is a crucial winning strategy.

The proposal is rife with endless possibilities for hilarious consequences or farce. It seeks to put form ahead of substance. For example, who is going to front for government in the Question Hour since we don't have a prime minister? To apply the notion of a shadow Cabinet would require the physical renovation of the Batasan, whose seating arrangements are like those in a Roman coliseum, giving our Congress the atmosphere of a circus, which it is.

The central furniture in a Westminster plenary hall is the long, rectangular table across which government ministers and their prospective replacement, the shadow ministers, are seated face to face during Question Hour to debate alternative policy issues. Given the fragmented state of the opposition, who will front for it as shadow ministers for foreign affairs, defense, finance, the treasury, or home affairs (interior)? This notion of accountability and shadow Cabinet is lost in the chaos of the distribution of seats: 91 Lakas, 44 Kampi, 28 NPC (for government) and 10 NP, 23 LP, 4 LDP, 4 PDP-Laban, 4 PMP for the opposition. Who will speak for the "opposition," Golez? This notion of opposition and government in a great divide has been blurred by the euphemism of majority and minority.

Maybe, Golez is not serious after all, and he just wants to provoke a debate that will highlight the absurdities of the presidential system.

Fil-Am in a strange world

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT DR. NOEL CHUA, 47, the Filipino-American internist, who has been languishing in a Georgia jail for nearly a year without a trial, will soon have his "day in court."

Edmund Silvestre, a reporter for the New York-based Filipino Reporter, who has been keeping the country updated on developments in the case, said no exact date has been given but the trial is expected to get underway by September.

Most believe the granting of a trial was the result of pressure from Chua's many supporters, particularly Filipino-American leaders in Georgia, who have, said Silvestre, "conducted a vigorous campaign (since early August) urging the authorities to speed up the litigation."

Silvestre wrote that he has gathered information that the federal government refused to take over the case from the Camden County District Attorney's Office and sent the case back to Georgia, "leaving DA Stephen Kelley in charge of the prosecution."

It was Kelley who decided to file murder charges against Chua for the death of James Carter III, a college student, patient and also part-time worker for the doctor. A grand jury charged that Carter overdosed on drugs prescribed by Chua and added drugs charges along with the murder indictment. The doctor was also charged under the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization) statute, which gave authorities the power to take control of all his assets, and left him without resources for his defense.

* * *

WHEN informed of the latest developments, Chua told the Reporter, "I'm very happy. I feel like God loves me very much. It's time for the whole truth to come out."

According to the Reporter, Chua also sent his supporters words of thanks by e-mail. "I praise and thank God for each one of you," wrote Chua. "Your efforts have finally stirred enough attention to my plight and I am now headed for a trial… Our God is an awesome God. He is forever righteous. I know and am confident that His justice will prevail during the trial. May the Lord bless and keep each one of you all the time."

Even better news is that the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA), the biggest Fil-Am political umbrella group in the United States, has offered its support to the Fil-Am community in Georgia in its quest for justice for Chua.

Silvestre said Chua's main concerns right now are his legal expenses "considering that he is represented by a high-powered lawyer touted as 'the best in Georgia and the rest of the US Southeastern Seaboard."

His lawyer, Donald Samuel, is a criminal law expert who has published numerous books and journals. In talks with Fil-Am community leaders, Samuel said that "there is no case against Dr. Chua" and that the death of Carter was "accidental," as supported by the autopsy and toxicology reports.

Various Fil-Am groups in Georgia and elsewhere have already raised funds for Chua's defense, but without access to his private funds, he can only rely on donations to ensure he gets the quality legal advice he needs.

* * *

BUT the bad news is that the money and most of the financial and medical records of Chua are now in the hands of a receiver, one appointed by the District Attorney's office, and who now accuses the Fil-Am doctor of insurance fraud.

It was at the request of Kelley that Chua's assets, including his medical practice, were "seized and placed in a receivership in Atlanta managed by attorney Michael Lambros and his partner." Since then, writes Gilmer White, a Chua supporter, to a local newspaper, "Mr. Lambros and his receivership have had full access to all of Dr. Chua's medical records, the clerks in his office, and other information privy to the District Attorney, and thus (have had) ample time and opportunity to investigate his billing practices."

And yet, "on the eve of Dr. Chua's trial … which a federal attorney has already declined to touch for what appears to be lack of evidence, and with (the DA and his team) trying to get Dr. Chua to agree to a plea bargain, which Dr. Chua has refused, Attorney Lambros comes up with this accusation of insurance fraud and gets Mr. Kelley's permission to proceed."

"Is it too much to ask reporters to investigate to see if Mr. Lambros' firm is in fact a disinterested party in this matter?" asks White. "Who recommended them from among the many receiverships available, including some in this area? Have they ever been known to have any connection, social or otherwise, to any of the parties arrayed against Dr. Chua, in particular to anyone in the District Attorney's office? In short, is this 11th-hour accusation by Mr. Lambros just a coincidence or does it have, as Shakespeare penned in 'The Tempest,' 'A very ancient and fish-like smell'? Fair questions."

* * *

AND so the case of Dr. Noel Chua, medicine honors graduate, 11th placer in the medical board, who put in a stint as missionary doctor in Palawan before he moved to the United States for his specialty training and practice, veers from good news to bad news, from finally seeing glimmers of the light of justice, only to sense even more ominous shadows ahead.

One thing this case should teach us is that no matter how accomplished a Filipino can become in the United States, no matter the adoption of American citizenship, the collection of material comforts and social and professional prestige, a single incident can wipe out this zone of comfort and plunge him or her into the strange, unfamiliar world of the American justice system.

Perhaps his ethnicity has nothing to do with his plight, but I very much doubt that if Chua had been Caucasian, he would have been made to suffer as much as he has already.

A British view of Filipinos in 1837

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

EVERY SEMESTER, I REQUIRE MY STUDENTS to dig up the newspapers on the day they were born and write a short essay describing what the Philippines was like on their birthday. The exercise is designed to show that most parents remember nothing about those times aside from the fact that a child was born unto them. Newspapers often challenge parental memory and prove that parents can sometimes be very unreliable sources of historical information.

My present students are Edsa babies (while my generation consisted of martial law babies), and their view of the world is different from mine. Many students notice that the Philippines has not changed much in the past two decades, the people who make news are still the same, the problems we face are the same.

This can be very depressing, which is why I was delighted to read a photocopy of a small pamphlet, "Centenary of Wise and Company in the Philippines 1826-1926," containing the observations John Wise compiled for the information of his father in 1837. Her Britannic Majesty's ambassador in Manila, Peter Beckingham, warned me that the text was politically incorrect, and upon reading it, I realized it was so politically incorrect that it was more amusing than annoying. The description of Pinoys and their character in 1834 is worth re-reading today, if only to see how much we have improved in the last century and a half:

"As in nearly all the islands in the Indian Archipelago, there are in the Philippines two distinct races of men, namely, the brown or yellow Malay cast with lank, black hair who live on the plains, and a black race with wooly hair that reside in the mountain fastnesses. The former are the most numerous and in general of short stature and tolerably well formed, with small head and limbs, high cheek bones, narrow forehead, flat nose, mouth pretty large, full lips, teeth naturally white and well set but rendered dark and sometimes even black by constantly chewing *buyo*, or betel nut, enveloped in a leaf plastered with quicklime. The chin is seldom visited by a beard, and the few straggling hairs which occasionally make their appearance are pulled out by the roots.

"The other class of natives are in effect Negroes of low stature. Little is known about them, as hitherto they have resisted the attempts made by the Spaniards to subjugate them; neither do they live in amity with their more civilized countrymen of the plains, who of course look upon them as their inferiors.

"There are a great number of mestizos in all parts of these Islands. Their dress is the same as the Indians. In Manila they are principally brokers, shopkeepers and traders; in the provinces, agriculturists, manufacturers, etc., etc., and some of them hold large properties. They are an industrious, peaceable class, and decidedly the most valuable part of the population.

"In referring to the Indians hereafter, let it be observed that it does not include the Negroes of the mountains.

"As husbandsmen they are peaceable, but not over industrious; food is so cheap that the labor of the season will furnish them with maintenance throughout the year. As manufacturers of the cloth of the country, they are diligent and ingenious. As mechanics depending on orders, they are found needy, generally requiring payment in advance; nor do they allow labor to interfere with laziness or pleasure. As sailors, they are enduring, though it is generally considered that it requires two of them to do the duty of one European. It never answers for them to form part of a mixed crew, for when their vengeance is awakened by real or imaginary grievances, they do not stop at murder; but when they are all Manila men, commanded by a captain and officers who understand their character, there is little or nothing to fear.

"As soldiers, they have had no experience, if we except some instances where there have been skirmishes with the mountaineers; it is said that they fought bravely when the English took Manila in 1762. I should however be disposed to place little reliance on their courage. As servants, they are not over honest, clean, or bright; but they are ready to do what is told them at all times without a murmur. As musicians, some of them display good taste. In the arts and sciences, no progress has been made, though we occasionally meet some who can paint.

"There are few who will not steal or cheat when they can do so with impunity; at the same time let it be observed that the shopkeepers frequently trust the provincial people. The majority of them are gamblers; games of chance and cockfighting, especially the latter are their delight; nor are they particular whether the money they have about them, which they stake, is their own or other people's.

"Amongst themselves they do not appear to be quarrelsome, as we seldom hear of any encounters, whether pugilistic or otherwise; nor are they the bloodthirsty race which they are thought to be, in as much as murders are not more frequent here than in other parts of the world. Of attachment and gratitude they are incapable; neither do they possess much natural affection, and it may be added that the females are not celebrated for chastity. In manners they are rather sheepish and obliging."

Do we recognize ourselves in this historical mirror? If we do, then we must be liberated from our history.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Boystown, Girlstown

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER, MANY OF US MAY HAVE tried to help out a poor but bright child through high school. It tends to start out well, with glowing reports and grades, and then something happens. The parents (more often, the mother) come sobbing about the student falling into bad company, about drugs, about *baon* spent in Internet cafés, about a pregnancy. Sometimes the child is still working hard at school, but is overwhelmed by problems at home or in the community.

I've avoided sponsoring students in high school, quite frankly. There's just too much that can go wrong. And yes, I've wondered at times if you could just put them in a greenhouse environment, sheltered from the world and given special care so they can concentrate on their studies.

It turns out there is such a place: Boystown and Girlstown (yes, kept separate) in Silang, Cavite. They're part of a global network of World Villages for Children begun by an American, Fr. Aloysius Schwartz. Starting with one facility in South Korea, Father Schwartz eventually set up more of his "villages" in the Philippines, Guatemala, Mexico and Brazil. He died in 1992, but a congregation he set up, the Sisters of Mary, continues his work. It is currently headed by a Korean, Sr. Michaela Kim.

Secret

Driving along the South Luzon Expressway, I've seen Boystown and Girlstown many times from afar, but it wasn't until last week that I finally got to visit, on the invitation of Ms Marixi Prieto, the INQUIRER's chair.

The event I attended was the inauguration of a new greenhouse at Boystown, donated by Lucio Tan, who personally attended together with another taipan, Washington Sycip. The greenhouse allows students to gain some experience with agriculture, while producing vegetables for their own school.

I thought the greenhouse was such an appropriate metaphor for the two institutions. Here are students plucked out of the poorest of families to receive an education they could only dream of. The kids have to be nominated by their parish priest, and should have been doing well in elementary school. The nuns themselves visit the families to make sure the child comes from a family in need (so good are their facilities there are better off families that try to get their child in).

Ms Prieto described the Sisters of Mary facilities as "one of the best kept secrets in the country." And indeed it is. The sisters have worked very quietly without fanfare or publicity, yet what they do would put many of our other educational institutions to shame.

Boystown and Girlstown are actually similar to the boarding schools you usually associate with the rich. Both are high schools, built on sprawling grounds with full facilities: classrooms, science labs, computers, several (yes, several) basketball courts for the boys, a huge gym/auditorium, a swimming pool. All the students live on campus throughout the year, except for two weeks when they get to go home. They have no allowance, but all their expenses are paid for: tuition, board and lodging, even uniforms and rubber shoes color-coded by year level.

What is so amazing is that 56 faculty members (including 14 nuns) are able to run the facilities for 2,300 male students. I didn't get the number of faculty for Girlstown, but there they have 3,600 students.

The Cavite facilities take care of children from all over Luzon. In Cebu, they have another two institutions for children from the Visayas and Mindanao.

'Trabaho'

I will be honest and say that I had mixed feelings about this greenhouse approach. I was relieved to know they still knew how to write letters, given that they don't have cell phones (more relief!) but, I kept wondering, with such a cloistered life, were they going to be prepared for the world outside?

It's hard to be conclusive from a half-day visit, but I'm inclined to be optimistic. I got to interview some of the kids, starting with the freshmen. When I approached them and introduced myself, they huddled together, craning their necks to listen. There was a look in their eyes that was a mix of curiosity, enthusiasm and painful shyness.

The sophomores were a bit more outspoken. When I got to the seniors, the self-esteem and confidence were very clear. There was still a bit of the shyness, but they were more assertive and articulate, without the cocky, even arrogant, qualities you see in other 16- and 17-year-olds.

They're in touch, I thought to myself as I watched their program with an impressive repertoire: a rondalla which has won several competition awards, a choral group that did a jazz number (a capella!), and dance numbers (with participants from Girlstown). The two hosts spoke English flawlessly, but not at the cost of Filipino: all the children I spoke, including non-Tagalogs, were very comfortable with Filipino.

What was so striking was that whether they were freshmen or seniors, when I'd ask what they intended to do after they were finished at Boystown, they'd answer, "*Mag trabaho.*" I realized many did intend to work right away, but that if they were given the chance, they'd try college. Most wanted to be engineers, business people or seafarers. I knew they were making practical choices. None of the seniors I interviewed talked about becoming a doctor, or a lawyer, and one shyly asked me what course one needed to take to become a journalist.

Yes, they have their own world in there, but all the kids share their roots in the harsh realities of poverty. And coming to Boystown and Girlstown does expose the children to new horizons. I met students from Ilocos Sur, Mindoro, Quezon, Romblon, Albay, Sorsogon, Mountain Province and Palawan. I knew friendships were being built, transcending regions and languages.

When I got back to Manila, I did an Internet search and found a website set up by the alumni (asmsi.org.ph). There was an announcement for alumni from Northern Luzon: an invitation to climb Mt. Pulag.

There's also a website for the World Villages (www.worldvillages.org), well-organized for fund-raising. But there are still so many needs that could use local support. Tan's greenhouse is only one example.

Over lunch, I asked Sr. Elena Belarmino, who is the academic director, if any of their graduates had entered the University of the Philippines. She said that last year, there was one student who passed the entrance exam, but didn't push through, worried about the living expenses. I suspect that if there were sponsors who could commit to supporting students' college living expenses, more would apply to UP and other state universities, and take courses like journalism or medicine (who knows, maybe anthropology as a pre-med option).

Then it struck me: Here I was with my reservations about a greenhouse approach and forgetting UP, too, is a greenhouse. Yet, we've produced graduates who are not just in touch with the world, but have dared to want to change it. Greenhouses can make a difference.

Comprehensive audit of Philippine debts urged

WHEN IT WAS REPORTED THAT THE Philippine government has finally paid in full its loan for the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, the Freedom from Debt Coalition warned that the country has still a horde of "white elephant-cum-anomalous" loans.

The case of the P500-million incinerator loan from Austria is another classic example of an illegitimate debt that must not be honored. Signed by the Department of Finance and the Bank of Austria in 1997, the loan involved the importation of 26 medical waste incinerators for Department of Health-run hospitals across the country. These incinerators, called Multizon, manufactured by Liechtenstein-based Hoval and supplied by the Austrian firm VAMED, eventually became useless following the implementation of the Clean Air Act of 1999.

The national government has been paying for this "toxic" debt since 2002 with a whooping $2 million or P100 million a year. Unfortunately, despite the retirement of the harmful project in 2003, Filipinos will still be paying the lender until 2014 because of the law on automatic appropriations for debt servicing.

The proposed national budget for 2008 has just been submitted to Congress for scrutiny and deliberation. We are calling on the legislative branch to exercise its so-called "power of the purse" to rescind the allotment for this "toxic" loan—not only from the proposed 2008 budget but also from the national account.

We are also appealing to the Austrian government to cancel the loan so that the Filipino people can enjoy the taxes they pay to the national government. If the Norwegian government has recognized last year its accountability for the $80 million it lent to five countries—Ecuador, Egypt, Peru, Jamaica and Sierra Leone—for a failed development initiative (Norwegian Ship Export Campaign from 1976-1980) and cancelled these countries' remaining debts without conditions, then it is not far-out to wish that the Austrian government arrive at the same benevolent decision.

Again, we say that there are more "BNPPs" out there. How about a comprehensive debt audit now?

—BOBBY C. DICIEMBRE,
media bureau,
Freedom from Debt Coalition,
11 Matimpiin St.,
Barangay Pinyahan,
Diliman, Quezon City 1100

What's GMA's environmental agenda?

WE, THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS OF THE present generation, are disappointed that we did not hear a comprehensive environmental rehabilitation plan from President Macapagal-Arroyo during her State of the Nation Address.

Even before we were born, environmental destruction was institutionalized in the country via the Timber License Agreements (TLAs) that reduced our primary forests to only 300,000 hectares as of today; mining companies, like Marcopper, were allowed to pollute and destroy many fishing areas. (Marcopper, it may be recalled, is the same company responsible for the worst mining disaster in the country, which happened in 1996.)

While the Clean Air Act and the Solid Waste Management Act have been passed, they have yet to be strictly enforced. To this day, open dumps exist in Manila, Navotas, Quezon City and in many parts of the country, while the government continues to approve the construction of coal-fired power plants.

Growing up, our generation came to know that the Philippines is one of the most beautiful and the most biologically diverse countries in the world. But our generation is also witness to the worst environmental tragedies (Ormoc flashflood, Payatas dump-crash, the Quezon/Aurora mudflows, Guinsaugon/St. Bernard landslide, Guimaras oil spill, Rapu-Rapu mining disasters). And our generation and those that will come after us will be witness to global climate change.

The silence of the President on the life-and-death issue of environment was very revealing. And shortly after the Sona, she placed under her direct supervision the issuance of mining permits—to hasten the process for the benefit of foreign companies, notwithstanding that mined sites have yet to be rehabilitated. She has also made the ratification of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (which will legalize the importation of toxic waste) a legislative priority.

Most recently, Ms Arroyo appointed former Manila Mayor Lito Atienza environment secretary despite his questionable record in environmental matters. Months back, instead of prosecuting Lafayette for its irresponsible mining practices in Rapu-Rapu Island, the government allowed it to resume permanent operations.

In her Sona, the President said the government would spend billions for infrastructure and facilities to attract investments. But what will all these serve if the environment and the people's lives have already been devastated?

We believe that an important aspect of nation-building is nurturing, rehabilitating and sustaining the environment and natural resources. If our dream of becoming a developed nation is to come true, then the first order of the day is to ensure that future generations will benefit from, and have access to, their natural resources and patrimony.

—DON JUNIO and OLGA GUELA,
League of Youth for the Environment (LYFE),
www.geocities.com/lyfeearth

Stop E-World from victimizing more Filipinos

I'VE READ CYNTHIA PATAG'S ARTICLE TITLED, "Encounters with the illegally recruited." (INQUIRER, 8/12/07)

I am one of the thousands of Filipinos who have been milked by E-World Resources. I am one of those who shelled out so much money to E-World just to comply with the requirements which, I was told, "have to be paid ASAP if you want your papers to be processed." I was one of those who were promised an employer after taking and passing the questionable American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence. I am one of those whom Norman Gibbs looked straight in the eye—without him batting a single blond eyelash—and assured that E-World is one legal agency that could provide me an employer. I am one of those whom his staff—all Filipinos, sadly!—milked of hard-earned savings.

Sad, really, because they looked you in the eye as if they would not betray you. My sister and I wanted to ask for help from the media and from the proper authorities to have this questionable trade stopped immediately. So many teachers and domestic helpers have suffered already.

Gibbs and his cohorts should be stopped before they can deprive more families of their savings and destroy more lives.

—JOHANNA GABRILLO MINGLANA,
johanna_minglana@yahoo.com

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PRE-WEEK LECTURES 2007

Date	Time	Subject	Lecturer
27 Aug (Mon)	8:00 -12:00 a.m.	How to Answer the Bar	Prof. Manuel Riguera
27 Aug (Mon)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Political Law	Prof. Rene Gorospe
28 Aug (Tue)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Constitutional Law	Prof. Rene Gorospe
29 Aug (Wed)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Admin/Special Laws	Prof. Rene Gorospe
30 Aug (Thu)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Labor Standards	Prof. J Oswald Lorenzo
31 Aug (Fri)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Labor Relations	Prof. J Oswald Lorenzo
03 Sep (Mon)	8:00 -12:00 a.m.	How to Answer the Bar	Prof. Gafar Lutian
03 Sep (Mon)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Persons & Succession	Prof. Vivian Paguirigan
04 Sep (Tue)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Property & Land Titles	Prof. Manuel Riguera
05 Sep (Wed)	1:00- 3:00 p.m.	Obligations & Contracts	Atty. Joseph Joemer Perez
05 Sep (Wed)	3:00- 5:00 p.m.	Special Contracts	Prof. Elmer Rabuya
06 Sep (Thu)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Tax I	Prof. Eric Recalde
07 Sep (Fri)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Tax II	Prof. Eric Recalde
10 Sep (Mon)	8:00 -12:00 a.m.	How to Answer the Bar	Profs. Gafar Lutian/Manuel Riguera
10 Sep (Mon)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Corporation Laws	Prof. Maria Zarah Villanueva-Castro
11 Sep (Tue)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Nego & Transportation	Prof. Gafar Lutian
12 Sep (Wed)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Insurance & Special Laws	Prof. Maria Zarah Villanueva-Castro
13 Sep (Thu)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Criminal Law I	Prof. Modesto Ticman, Jr.
14 Sep (Fri)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Criminal Law II & Special Laws	Prof. Modesto Ticman, Jr.
17Sep(Mon)	8:00 -12:00 a.m.	How to Answer the Bar	Prof. Gafar Lutian
17Sep(Mon)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Civil Procedure	Prof. Manuel Riguera
18Sep(Tue)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Civ Pro/Criminal Procedure	Prof. Manuel Riguera
19Sep(Wed)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Evid/Special Proceedings	Prof. Manuel Riguera
20Sep(Thu)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Evidence	Prof. Manuel Riguera
21Sep(Fri)	1:00- 5:00 p.m.	Legal Ethics	Prof. Erick Balmes

SPECIAL LECTURES 2007

01 Sep (Sat)	1:00-2:30 p.m.	Labor Law	Prof. Darlene Marie Berberabe-Lim
01 Sep (Sat)	2:30 - 5:00 p.m.	Political Law	Prof. Edwin Sandoval
08 Sep (Sat)	1:00 -3:00 p.m.	Taxation	Prof. Rizalina Lumbera
08 Sep (Sat)	3:00- 5:00 p.m.	Civil Law	Profs. Gafar Lutian/Manuel Riguera
15 Sep (Sat)	1:00 -3:00 p.m.	Criminal Law	Justice Mario Lopez
15 Sep (Sat)	3:00- 5:00 p.m.	Mercantile Law	Profs. Manuel Riguera/Gafar Lutian
22 Sep (Sat)	3:30- 5:00 p.m.	Legal Ethics	Prof. Erick Balmes
22 Sep (Sat)	5:00 -7:30 p.m.	Remedial Law	Prof. Tranquil Salvador III

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‘I heard GMA ask Garci about additional 1-M votes’

From page A1

Ms Arroyo cheated the late Fernando Poe Jr. in the 2004 election with the help of Garcillano—an accusation they both denied. Ms Arroyo posted a final winning margin of over 1 million votes.

Both Malacañang and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr. declined immediate comment when asked for their reactions.

Doble broke into the news in June 2005 when he and his common-law wife sought refuge at the San Carlos Seminary in Makati City after it was reported that he had a copy of the recordings of Ms Arroyo's phone talk with Garcillano.

He left the seminary and turned himself in after the military took custody of his wife and his children. Little was heard of him since—until yesterday when opposition Sen. Panfilo “Ping” Lacson presented his video testimony during a privilege speech in the Senate.

Project Lighthouse

Doble's testimony came more than two years after the scandal first broke and plunged the Arroyo presidency into its worst political crisis.

It provoked two unsuccessful impeachment attempts against Ms Arroyo in 2005 and 2006 and the resignations of 10 senior presidential advisers, plunged her approval ratings to a record low, and sparked coup plots which she eventually quashed.

For a time, it did not seem like Ms Arroyo would survive the crisis. But she did.

Fear for family

Doble, a former agent of the Military Intelligence Group-21 of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) revealed how the military formed a covert unit codenamed “Project Lighthouse” to eavesdrop on both opposition and administration personalities in 2004 and how he was forced to keep silent on the issue.

“For two years and running, the country has been kept in the dark about the truth behind ‘Hello Garci’ because the man who knew the conversations were illegally tapped for political and other purposes could not speak out,” Lacson said.

“His family was kidnapped in Kidapawan, North Cotabato, brought to Manila, detained in the basement of the official residence of the chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines inside Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City, to which he himself was brought later. Thus was his silence guaranteed by the terror of fear for his family.”

Targets of wiretap

In the video, Doble, who was assigned to MIG 21 in March 1994, said Project Lighthouse was formed to monitor the phone conversations of several personalities, including Poe, former Agrarian Reform Secretary Horacio Morales, actor Rex Cortez, Magdalo officers such as now Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV, Rafael Faeldon, Nilo Maestrocampo, and Gerardo Gambala, Sen. Gringo Honasan, and former Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor—and Garcillano.

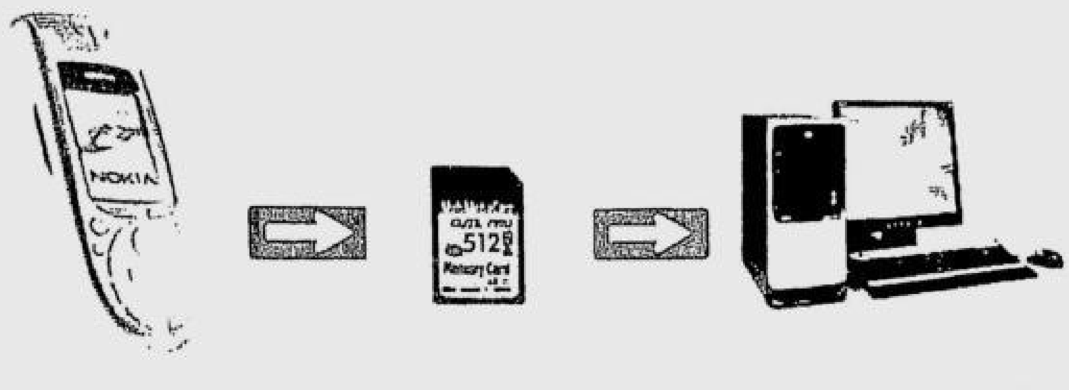
Doble said the team was led by Col. Paul Sumayo (who has left the Isafp), Capt. Frederick Rebong (who later went to school abroad), and Capt. Lindsay Rex Sumayo (who is still with the Isafp).

Initially, Doble said he did not know that the man with the code name “Gary” was Garcillano, whom he came to know only after weeks of bugging his phone calls.

Speaking about the conversation in which Ms Arroyo supposedly spoke about the “additional one million votes,” Doble said:

STEP 3

- The conversation is recorded as a digital file to a memory card, and is transferred to a computer.



Mig 21's Phone Memory Card Card reader on PC

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION of Lacson includes this slide on a four-step process on how wiretapping was done. ROGER MARGALLO

Master tape

“At that time our team was on duty. We recorded it, gave the tape to Captain Rebong. The master tape was left with us. I gave four master tapes to Lito Santiago, an aide of former NBI Director Samuel Ong.”

Doble said he went straight to the San Carlos Seminary with Ong, who later spoke in a press conference about the so-called “master tapes” of the “Hello Garci” recordings.

But Doble said he was later surprised when he was picked up by Bishop Socrates Villegas and brought to Camp Aguinaldo to the quarters of former Chief of Staff General Efren Abu.

“I saw my two children and my wife detained in the basement of General Abu's quarters. This is why I didn't continue my exposé on the Garci tapes,” Doble said in Filipino.

Held from June ’05-April ’06

“My family was kept in custody from June 2005 to April 2006. I was there from June 2005 until I was discharged in February 2007. I did not reenlist.”

Asked why he waited two years to speak out, Doble said: “Because I saw that cheating was rampant in the May 14, 2007 election. Nothing changed since the May 2004 elections where there was cheating.”

Lacson presented a four-step process on how the wiretapping was done, “like Big Brother listening to conversations between Little Sister and an elections commissioner named Virgilio Garcillano.” *(See illustration on this page.)*

“It only takes a service provider willing to cooperate and conspire with whoever has knowledge in basic surveillance,” said Lacson. He did not identify the service provider.

With visual aids, Lacson guided the senators through the “crude” wiretap process employed by Project Lighthouse:

First, the conversation from Garcillano's phone goes through the service provider's or phone company's main tower; second, the phone company splits the signal to relay the same call to the Nokia 3600 of Doble;

Third, Doble records the conversation on the unit's removable memory card, which is preprogrammed to record conversations;

Finally, the digital file is transferred to a personal computer.

Lacson said Doble's team had to transfer the recorded files constantly because they had no spare memory cards and recorded either in CD or audio cassette.

“The characters mentioned in the ‘Hello Garci’ tapes of 2005 have not been subjected to any proper investigation much less by the Comelec (Commission on Elections) itself. They have not been prosecuted for crimes against the sovereign electorate,” the senator added.

“They have remained in the woodwork of the Comelec and some of them have been promoted or reshuffled, the better to ensure that elections will remain unclean, dishonest and incredible,” Lacson said, citing Comelec officials Lintang Bedol, Lilian Radam and Ray Sumalipao.

Lacson challenged Commissioner Rene Sarmiento, who has announced plans to reopen the Hello Garci case: “Mr. Commissioner, I am telling you now, we have Exhibit A in the person of Vidal Doble Jr. I challenge you to make good on your promise.”

Lacson also challenged Ms Arroyo to invoke Executive Order No. 464 barring her executives from appearing in congressional hearings without her consent.

“I challenge Malacañang to allow the truth to prevail. The Filipino people deserve nothing less,” said Lacson.

Aside from Doble who has committed to appear in a Senate investigation, Lacson said the committee would summon Abu, Bishop Villegas, Col. Paul Sumayo (head of Project Lighthouse), Capt. Rebong (who was Doble's team head), and other members of Project Lighthouse.

Senate to probe

The Senate agreed to investigate Lacson's claims as a committee of the whole.

The Senate only convenes as a committee of the whole on rare occasions and on a matter of utmost national importance. The committee is chaired by the Senate President.

RP stocks soar but jitters remain

From page A1

P428.61 billion, leaving the Philippine stock market with a 6.2-percent gain for the year.

As Asian markets recovered on Monday after the US Federal Reserve cut its emergency discount rate by 50 basis points at the end of last week, investors in the Philippine bourse were held at bay because of the holiday.

Playing catch up

“We are playing catch-up. Europe rallied on Friday as well as the Dow. We are just following their leads,” said Jose Vistan, head of research at AB Capital Securities.

The broader all-share index ended up 150.94 points to 2,016.16. Out of 156 stocks traded, 135 advanced, eight declined, and 13 were unchanged.

Leading the advancers were blue chips Bank of the Philippine Islands, Ayala Land and Philippine Long Distance Telephone. BPI rose 11 percent to P59.50; Ayala Land jumped 5.7 percent to P14; and PLDT climbed 9.8 percent to P2,520. ***(See Philippine stock market table in Business, Page B8)***.

Vistan said the Federal Reserve's action provided a calming effect to the market and soothed investor fears of a credit crunch.

“The Fed's decision to cut its discount rate reversed the negative sentiment that had been prevailing in global markets,” he said.

“That measure sent a strong signal to investors that the Fed would act if necessary to stabilize the markets. It took out the element of irrational fear that has gripped investors in recent weeks,” he added.

Flight to quality

Francisco Liboro, president of PCCI Securities Brokers, noted that buying by foreign investors was primarily on blue chips. “Even there, you see a flight to quality,” he said.

A total of 4.6 billion shares worth P5.6 billion were traded on Tuesday. Net foreign buying was thin at P99 million—foreigners bought P3.19 billion but sold P3.09 billion worth of local shares.

Vistan said he expected the market's sharp rise to open a window for jittery investors to take profit in coming days.

“The damage due to the big sell-offs in previous weeks is still there. There will be some selling on rallies and this will cap gains (going forward),” he said.

Ron Rodrigo of Unicapital Securities said concerns about fallout from the US subprime mortgage troubles were likely to linger, making markets volatile and prone to quick profit taking on any upside.

High alert for signs of trouble

“We are not completely out of the woods. Investors will be wanting to see if key central banks will continue intervening if needed to bring stability to the market,” he said.

Most Asian stock markets rallied for a second straight day on Tuesday as fears of a credit crisis jeopardizing global economic growth continued to recede. ***(See related story in Business, Page B8)***

But several bourses lost ground as investors remained on high alert for fresh signs of trouble in credit markets due to problems in US subprime mortgages to high-risk borrowers.

European stock markets also struggled to maintain their recovery in early trade despite declining fears of a full-blown credit crunch. ***With reports from AP and AFP***

GMA on dropouts: Let them sweep streets

From page A1

she was told that peasants were starving before her head was put on the guillotine during the French Revolution.

In any event, Sales was sacked—or, in euphemistic terms, asked to resign—in June for unexplained reasons.

Ms Arroyo's remarks highlighted the conundrum of an administration grappling with massive problems that have hounded the country's educational system for the last three decades.

The Department of Education (DepEd) says out-of-school youths aged 6-11 total 1.8 million while those in the 12-15 age bracket number 3.9 million, not counting the millions of adult illiterates willing to learn.

Mobile teachers

The DepEd's alternate education system is administered by a cadre of 1,381 “mobile teachers” who visit barangays once in a blue moon to hand out learning materials. One-on-one interaction with enthusiastic pupils is rare.

Even so, there are some bright spots.

One of the beneficiaries of the program was boxing icon Manny Pacquiao, who claimed to have scored a knockout breezing through examinations under the DepEd's accreditation and equivalency test programs earlier this year.

The champ thought that this would give him entry to Ateneo de Manila University in a course on political science that he could use sometime. In May, however, Pacquiao lost in the congressional race in his hometown of General Santos City, derailing his planned political career. Nothing's been heard of his schooling plans since.

Former Education Secretary Florencio “Butch” Abad sounds sympathetic to the President whom he served for 10 months before he quit two years ago during the mass resignation of Cabinet officials in the wake of the “Hello Garci” caper that the opposition said was evidence Ms Arroyo stole the 2004 presidential election—a charge she has denied.

A question of priorities

“You have to address basic issues,” says Abad. “We have not managed the system well.”

Problems abound, he says. The government needs to provide livelihood to parents. There is a high attrition rate—up to 70 percent from Grades 1 to 3.

It is a question of poverty. “Many go to schools without having eaten breakfast. They are needed for farm work. Ninety-seven percent have dental deficiency. We have to attack that. Only half of the students that should be in the public school system are in fact there and the other half is outside,” Abad says.

“Our nonformal education program is barely trying to address the problem because it's not getting as much money or attention,” he says. “We don't have the infrastructure to deal with that.

It all boils down to a question of priorities.

A debate is now raging on a government plan to set up a national broadband network that will essentially electronically wire the entire bureaucracy to save on telephone bills and a “cyber education program” that will bring teaching lessons to far-flung barangays live via an orbiting satellite.

China will provide the infrastructure and initially run the setup through official development assistance, or ODA, meaning a loan payable in 20 years at 3-percent interest.

BOT turns into ODA

Many are scratching their heads trying to figure out how these programs turned into ODA deals—in other words, government to government, without benefit of public bidding—when the original plan was to negotiate build-operate-transfer (BOT) arrangements without a cent being plunked down and with the benefits of entrepreneurial competition.

Underscoring the importance of the arrangements, Ms Arroyo left her husband posthaste as he lay in a hospital recovery room after undergoing a parlous heart surgery to attend the signing ceremony in April in the Chinese resort city of Boao.

There's a hiccup, though.

Hardly had the ink dried when someone stole the contracts worth over $1 billion in the hotel room of a Filipino official after the documents were signed by representatives of China and the Philippines.

The theft was unprecedented, officials say.

It came to light two months later. During a forum at the Ateneo business school, an Australian businessman running a charity school for the blind using computers elicited from the guest, Communications Assistant Secretary Lorenzo G. Formoso, an admission that the contract documents had in fact disappeared.

In attendance was a representative of the US Embassy, which has publicly slammed the China deal for having been hammered out without benefit of public bidding or any semblance of transparency.

Apart from the issue of whether the contracts, reportedly reconstituted and reaffirmed subsequently, were still legally enforceable, there are questions of whether the government has the capacity to run and maintain the programs that are constantly being improved by scientists overseas.

‘We cannot be stymied’

Still, Education Secretary Jesli Lapus is sanguine. He scoffs at suggestions his department does not have the capacity to run the show.

“The thirst for information technology is already there in the system,” he says, insisting that the cyber program is the best way to modernize and improve the educational system.

Lapus says only the government can provide the scale and scope of distance learning. He refers to the privately run Knowledge Channel on TV that after nine years only reaches 1,800 schools. “At that rate, they will need 25 more years. By that time we'll have 40,000 schools,” he says.

“We cannot be stymied because of the existing problems. This is the solution there,” he says, calling the program the means to provide equal access to education for all and an alternative to “ineffective teacher training.”

The DepEd says the program seeks to establish a dedicated network that will carry 12 video channels, local area networking, or LAN, and wireless Internet connectivity. It says this will make available “the same high quality education to the biggest number of learners in the shortest possible time.”

90% of schools to be wired

The project seeks to serve 37,795, or 90 percent, of public schools, within the next three years.

“All these schools will experience improvement in teaching methodologies and access to educational content,” the DepEd says of the program that will receive assistance from Tsinghua University, touted as “one of the world's pioneers in distance education.”

“It's great,” Abad says of the DepEd's cyber education project. But he says he has visited a number of public high schools equipped with computers. “They have serious problems about maximizing use of the equipment and even serious problems of maintaining them.”

Sen. Edgardo Angara, who has immersed himself in education issues in his 30 years in the Senate, worries that not much is being done for the 11-13 million school-age Filipinos outside the formal education system.

Ill-thought out

Angara says the government is mandated to address the problem, push policy-makers into action and prick the public conscience. “We've been sweeping it under the rug for so long. We can't do it any more,” he says.

But the senator thinks the P27-billion cyber education program is an “ill-thought-out venture.” He would rather use the money in “selective intervention.”

“My biggest comment is that it is all about hardware, but where is the software, what is the content, what will you feed the satellite,” Angara says.

Abad adds: “The most important technological achievement is having a classroom.” ***With reports from Tony Bergonia and Beverly T. Natividad***

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

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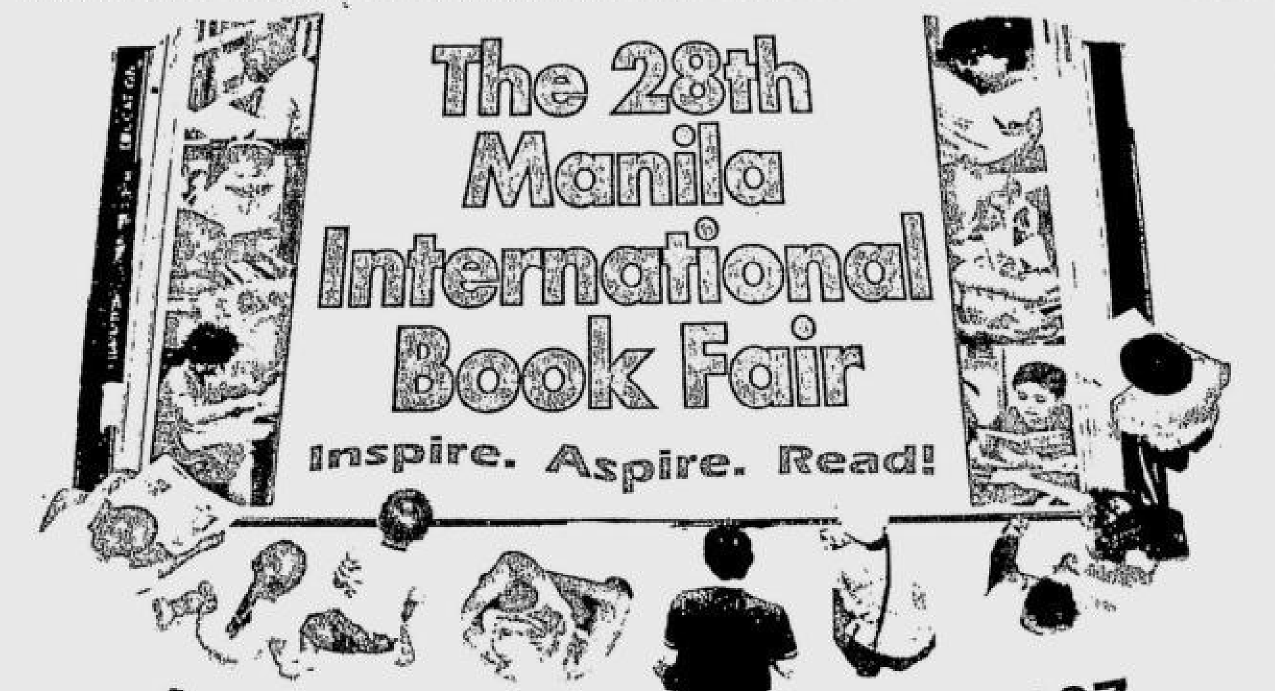

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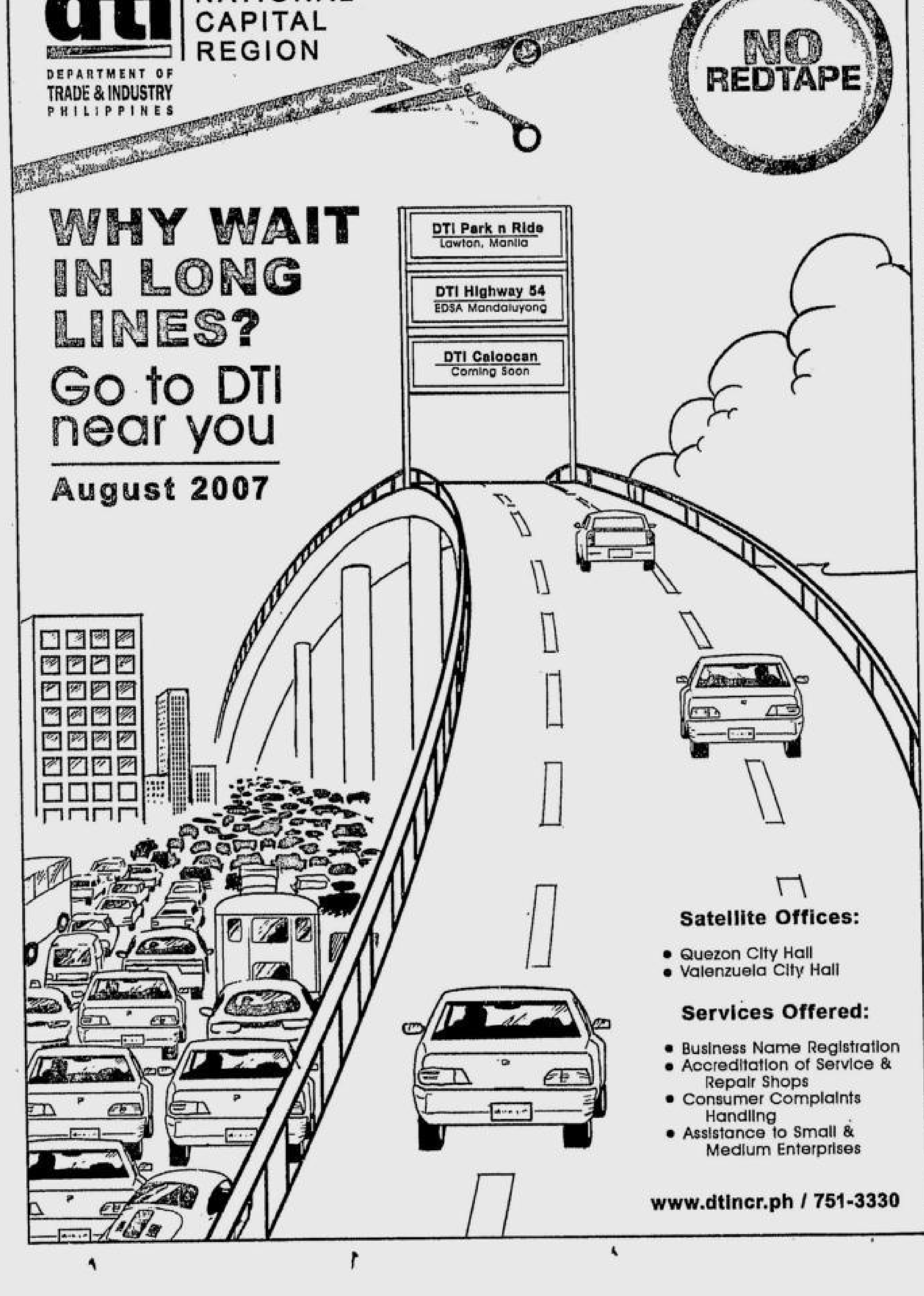

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TALENTS of the documentary "Our Igorot Fathers, the Heroes" in their 66th Infantry and Japanese Imperial Army uniforms. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Igorot documentary captures 'battle among the clouds'

By Maurice Malanes
La Trinidad, Benguet

THEY OFTEN TELL THEIR trials and triumphs during World War II over cups of native coffee or *tapuy* (rice wine) at social gatherings. But old Igorot soldiers of World War II are not just fading away; they are also dying and their heirs worry that nobody is left to tell their stories.

Fortunately for the veterans, some of their grandchildren, anxious that such part of Benguet's historic gem will be forgotten altogether, have thought of documenting in film their grandfathers' stories of valor, courage and sacrifice.

The premier showing of the first documentary about Igorot war veterans was the highlight of a series of activities honoring Benguet's World War II heroes on Aug. 15, the day the province was liberated from the Japanese Imperial Army 62 years ago.

Thanks to the initiatives of ResearchMate, a local research group, and the Outstanding Students of the Cordillera Administrative Region (Oscar) Alumni Community Inc., which produced the documentary, Aug. 15 from now on may yet be institutionalized as an important Benguet historic holiday.

Many members and associates of ResearchMate and Oscar are either children or grandchildren of World War II veterans. Their common interest in local history finally led them to embark on a film project about their forebears' heroism even with a shoestring budget.

The 45-minute "Our Igorot Fathers, the Heroes: The Untold Story of the 66th Infantry Regiment, USAFIP-NL" chronicles how, six months after the fall of Bataan in April 1942, Igorot soldiers returned to Benguet to help build the resistance movement until the Japanese finally surrendered in 1945.

The film seeks to tell more comprehensively what used to be vignettes of the whole story of the Igorot resistance against the Japanese Imperial Army in the last war.

Turning north towards Benguet and other parts of the Cordillera was the wisest decision for the resistance movement after the fall of Bataan on April 9, 1942. For one, the rugged and forested terrain of the mountain region was ideal for guerrilla warfare.

The other reason, which the film also noted, is that Benguet and the other mountain provinces had self-sufficient sweet potato and upland rice-producing communities to support the guerrillas in hiding.

Battle trails

In making the documentary "we had to follow and visit the trails of actual battles, which still have traces of foxholes, as we interviewed surviving veterans and reenacted encounters (between the Japanese and Igorot guerrillas)," says Betty Lestino of ResearchMate.

The filmmakers visited actual battle sites in the towns of Sablan, Tuba, La Trinidad, Bokod, Kabayan, Buguias, Mankayan and Kapangan.

"In the process, we were able to collect bomb and ammunition shells and other war gear, which we plan to put in a museum," says Lestino.

To reenact the battles, the filmmakers had to employ 35 volunteer talents from Benguet and Mt. Province, who underwent a weeklong military training under the La Trinidad police and a consultant from the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The 66th Infantry

Given the filmmakers' meager budget, which they solicited from the Benguet provincial government and other donors, the documentary may not have the perfect simulation of war battles shown in well-funded movies.

But the documentary sufficiently shows how the 66th Infantry Regiment of the USAFIP-NL (United States Armed Forces in the Philippines-Northern Luzon) liberated Baguio City and Benguet.

Composed mostly of soldiers from Benguet and Mt. Province, the 66th Infantry had to face a well-entrenched and battle-tested enemy.

When the USAFIP-NL set its D-Day on Jan. 4, 1945, the Japanese had already established strategic defense lines in Benguet, which they practically had controlled since after the war broke in 1941.

The Japanese had controlled Naguilian and Kennon roads, the Mountain Trail (now Halsema Highway), and the gold and copper-rich Lepanto area.

But there was no stopping the 66th Infantry, which was attached to the US Sixth Army Division. The Igorot soldiers launched their assault along the Japanese's Rosario-Damortis line of defense so they could approach Baguio City through Naguilian and Kennon roads.

Simultaneous assaults

The infantry's simultaneous assaults against the Japanese in these two main roads finally liberated Sablan on April 10 and Tuba on April 26. All these led to more assaults that finally liberated Baguio City on April 27 and La Trinidad on May 3.

In June 1945, the USAFIP-NL mother unit ushered in the 66th Infantry to reinforce the 121st and 15th Infantry in a battle with the Japanese at Bessang Pass, Ilocos Sur.

The 66th Infantry was again assigned for combat operations in the Tagudin to Cervantes Highway at the right flank of Bessang Pass.

On June 14, after more than five months of armed clashes at and around Bessang Pass, where almost all soldiers of the 121st Infantry were killed, this "bloody and decisive battle among the clouds" (as a war chronicle described it) was finally won, "swinging open Yamashita's western door."

After the battles at Bessang Pass, all units of the USAFIP-NL continued their assault into the Mt. Province (at that time Mt. Province comprised what is now the provinces of the Cordillera).

For its part, the 66th Infantry tested its mettle in the villages of Comillas and Lepanto in Mankayan up to Abatan and Loo Valley in Buguias town. Here the 66th Infantry, after launching its assault on June 17, 1945, faced the regular and battle-tested 19th Division, also called the Tora Division, of the Japanese army numbering about 2,000 troops.

After 27 days of fierce fighting, Lepanto in Mankayan was finally liberated on July 20, eliminating what the film noted was "one of the best fortified enemy positions in Northern Luzon, nay, the whole Southwest Pacific area."

From Lepanto and Mankayan, the 66th Infantry pursued the enemy to Abatan in Buguias, securing the area on July 27.

While the 66th Infantry was pursuing the remaining Japanese at Loo Valley on Aug. 15, Emperor Hirohito of Japan went on radio for the first time to order all Japanese to lay down their arms.

With this, USAFIP-NL commanding officer, Col. Russell W. Volckmann, issued a ceasefire order. Japan surrendered, and after five years of conflict Benguet was finally liberated on Aug. 15, 1945.

The documentary has helped remind Benguet's officials to celebrate for the first time the province's liberation anniversary.

"Benguet's celebration of its Liberation Day serves as a reminder of the gallantry and sacrifices of our own local heroes," says a flyer of ResearchMate and Oscar. "The trails (the 66th Infantry) left reflect the Igorots' inherent bravery, love for family, and love for freedom."

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Gov't postpones talks with MILF

PEACE TALKS BETWEEN THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND THE country's biggest Muslim separatist group have been postponed until next month, the government's chief negotiator said on Tuesday.

Rodolfo Garcia, retired general, said a military offensive in Basilan and Sulu against Islamic militants was not the reason for the postponement of negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which had been scheduled to begin on Wednesday in Malaysia.

"I did request for the postponement of talks to a new date next month so I would have more time to refine our position," Garcia told Reuters, adding the government had no intention of abrogating the negotiations.

"I have to admit there were some residual issues that have to be resolved within the government side. I want a more solid and concrete position before I would sit down and unveil our package on the table. I needed more time to fine tune our position."

Garcia declined to comment on reports that there were conflicting views on the peace process within the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo, saying it was normal to have debate among members of the Cabinet on policies and issues.

"I don't want to face the other side on the table without any mandate from my principal. It was useless to meet with nothing substantial to discuss with the MILF," he said.

Garcia said the talks, which were expected to focus on an autonomy package for the rebels, would be held before the start of the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan on Sept. 13.

The MILF said it was informed of the postponement very late.

"We were already at the Manila airport and ready to fly to Malaysia when we were told the talks were called off by the government panel," Mohaqher Iqbal, the chief negotiator of the MILF told Reuters.

The MILF said the government was backtracking on its offer to grant Muslims the right of self-determination, accusing three members of Arroyo's Cabinet opposed to the resumption of talks of causing the cancellation of the meeting in Malaysia.

It was the second time the government postponed the meeting this year, the first being in May.

"Our panel members are already on their way to Kuala Lumpur when the government informed us of the cancellation," Jun Mantawil, head of the MILF secretariat, said in a statement.

The talks would have centered on the extension of the life of the International Monitoring Team (IMT) and the issue of territory for the future Bangsamoro government.

The panels were also expected to discuss the entry of Canada and other countries to the Malaysian-led IMT.

Abhoud Syed Mansur-Lingga, head of the Bangsamoro Assembly, said the postponement of the talks surprised peace advocates.

"It came at a time when there is a need to iron out thorny issues and the Mindanao situation," Lingga, also director of the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, told the INQUIRER.

Lingga said he fears that the continued postponement of the talks could lead to the total collapse of the peace process. *Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao and Reuters*

PILFERED items, like transmission lines of the Albay Electric Cooperative, are said to be brought to steel and iron manufacturers in Metro Manila or China. NIÑO JESUS ORBETA

Pilfered electric lines in Albay end up in Manila, China, cops say

LEGAZPI CITY—PILFERED transmission lines in the province were being brought to establishments in Metro Manila, that manufacture steel and iron products, while some were being exported to China, reports received by police in Albay revealed.

The series of pilferages of transmission lines from October 2006 to July this year triggered power interruptions in the province, which caused government to lose around P99 million in revenue and P50-million worth of pilfered and damaged aluminum conductor steel.

Albay police director Senior Supt. Herold Ubalde said aside from reinforcing police strategy to stop pilferage, they have also drafted ordinances regulating the operations of junk shops, where pilfered items are sold.

One of the provisions in the draft ordinance, which will be submitted to local government units, was to require junk shop owners and their employees to undergo training on what items are saleable and what are strictly not.

The ordinance will also grant barangay captains power to inspect junk shops.

Ubalde said there should be a national law categorizing theft of telephone and electric wires as economic sabotage and increasing its penalty.

Pantaleon Sanfuego, head of Customer Access Network of Bayan Telecommunications Inc. in Legazpi, said his company incurred a loss of P57 million from December 2006 to May this year due to pilferage.

"It took us almost P90 million to restore pilfered lines and those damaged by the typhoons late last year," he added.

Ubalde said while an awareness campaign has been launched on pilferage, long-term plans should also be made to give people jobs.

He said poverty still remains the main cause of pilferage in Bicol, which is one of the poorest regions in the country.

There were a total of 21 pilferage cases in Albay from October 2006 to July this year. Legazpi City had the most cases, that occurred in January, according to Ubalde.

This month, the Albay police haven't listed any pilferage case. Ubalde said this was a good sign.

He said police have been keeping a close watch on cargo trucks that carry pilfered wires.

Police, he said, have also identified three suspected pilferage gangs and have seized 18 sacks of assorted telephone copper wires worth around P1.1 million, 711 kg of aluminum strands, 258 kg of aluminum conduction wires, and parts of power transformers in four operations from January to July.

Albay police records showed that in Tiwi town there were 9,600 meters of wires pilfered; Malinao town, 6,240 meters; and in Ligao City, 1,080 meters from October 2006 to July.

The tripping of the Naga-Tiwi line last May 30, June 10, and June 28 were caused by pilferages. *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Brokers pushing gov't probe of Baguio Koreans

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—REAL ESTATE brokers in the city are pushing the government investigation of Koreans who have been buying up lots here because Korean speculators have allegedly driven up Baguio land prices in the last two years.

Members of the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders' Associations (Creba) have also informed the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board (HLURB) in an Aug. 17 dialogue about the unexplained growth of condominium buildings that are being marketed to South Koreans, said Tom Panis, a Creba member.

There is clear evidence these pieces of properties are owned by Koreans themselves, Panis said.

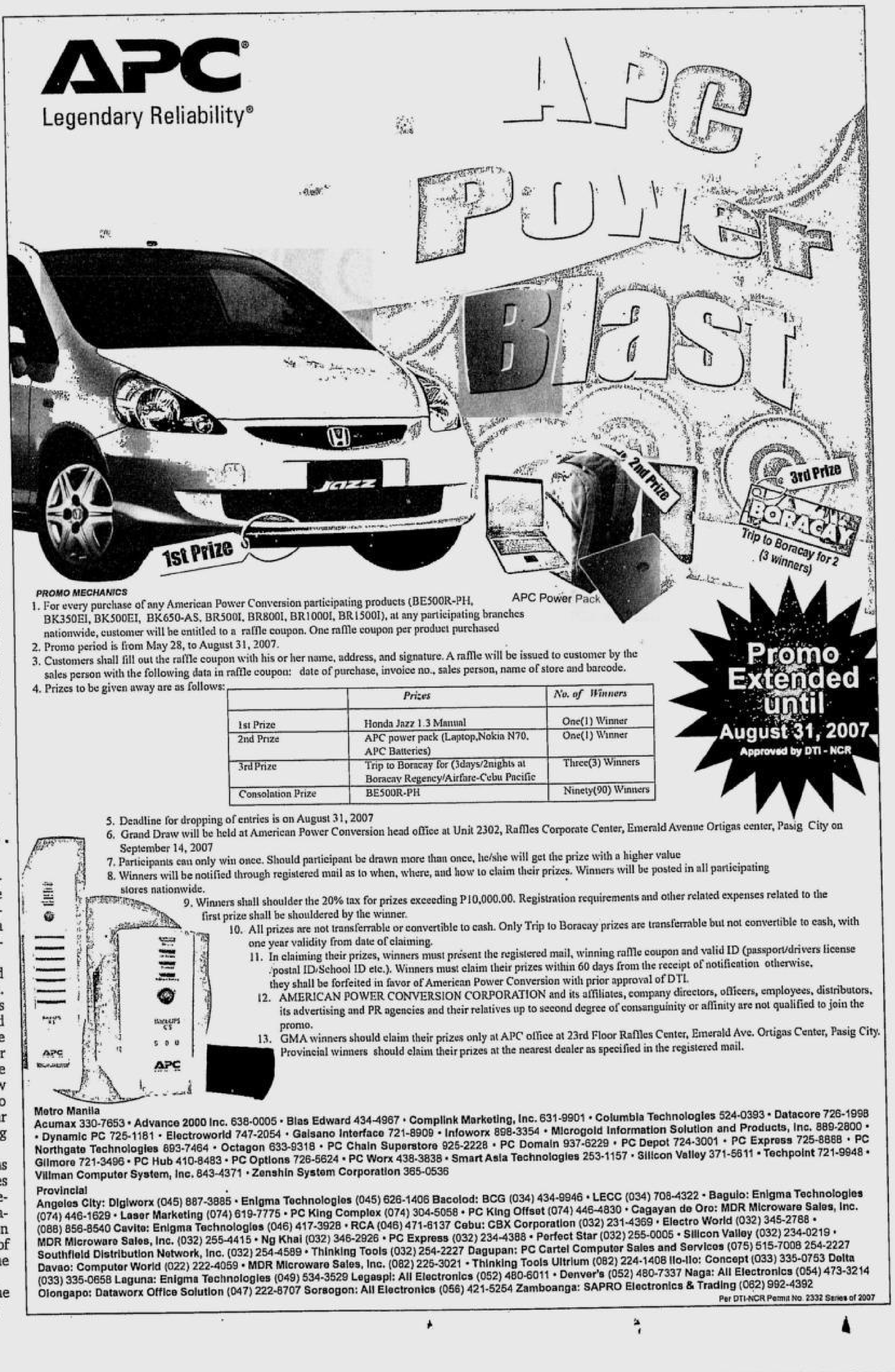
"They have been advertising Baguio over there (South Korea)," he said.

Koreans, however, have become the local real estate industry's "true major client these days" because the city's traditional clients from Metro Manila have already lost interest, a broker said on Tuesday.

"[Metro] Manila [clients] used to come and buy Baguio land. But who wants to drive six hours today only to find squatters and pollution in the city? Koreans are actually the new market for [Baguio] lands, and we welcome them but they just do not follow our rules," said one broker, who declined to be identified for fear it would jeopardize ongoing transactions with clients.

The Bureau of Immigration has recommended filing charges against three Baguio-based Koreans for owning properties in violation of a constitutional provision that restricts foreign ownership of properties or businesses in the Philippines to only 40 percent.

"But that's only the tip of the iceberg," the Creba source said.



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Tears fill Marine gym again

By Christine O. Avendaño and Tarra Quismundo

FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS MONTH, the gymnasium at Philippine Marines headquarters in Fort Bonifacio was filled with mourners and the loved ones of 13 of the 15 Marines killed during a military raid of an Abu Sayyaf camp in Basilan last weekend.

Only weeks ago, other mourners had crowded the gym in a wake for their dead—14 Marines, 10 of whom had been beheaded—who were killed in an ambush by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Abu Sayyaf group, which sparked the current military operations against the ASG.

For most of the families, it was the first time they glimpsed the remains of the relatives, following the arrival of the bodies from Zamboanga City Monday night.

That's why Purita Tariman couldn't help but cry in anguish when she saw her favorite nephew, Cpl. Ursulo Torres Jr., lying in his white coffin.

"*Ang bait-bait ng batang ito. Kaya 'di ko matanggap* (He was a very good boy, that's why I cannot accept this.)," Tariman told reporters as her brother, Torres' father, tried to console her.

The older Torres said his sister was crying so much because she had raised Torres, the fifth of his six children from his late wife.

At the end of the row of coffins at the gym-

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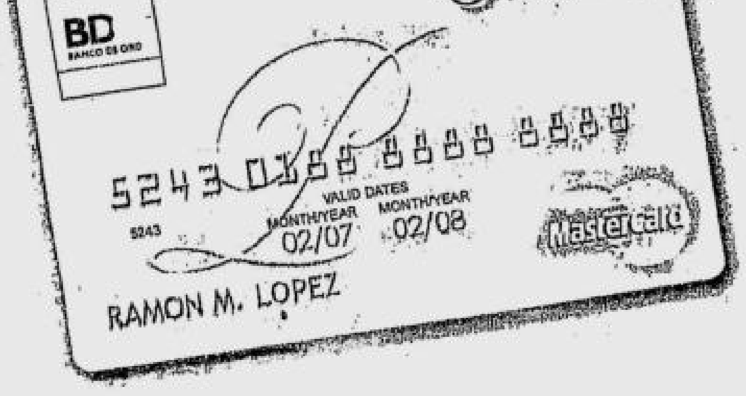

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DID YOU KNOW

THE NATIONAL Statistics Office, originally called the Bureau of the Census and Statistics, was created by Commonwealth Act No. 591 on Aug. 19, 1940. The BCS was renamed the National Census and Statistics Office in 1974, and was placed under the administrative supervision of the National Economic and Development Authority. The statistical agency, which undertakes censuses, got its current name in 1987. It was placed under the Office of the President, but was later placed again under Neda. The NSO headquarters is in Sta. Mesa, Manila.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research

FORMER basketball player Paul "Bong" Alvarez (center) tells policemen his side of the story after ABS-CBN television reporter Gretchen Malalad (right) and taxi driver Wilfredo Cabalit (left) accused him of attacking them in separate incidents in Mandaluyong City yesterday. RUDY ESPERAS

Reporter, cabbie file assault raps vs ex-cager

Cops say Alvarez also resisted arrest

By Kristine L. Alave

FORMER BASKETBALL PLAYER PAUL "BONG" Alvarez found himself in the middle of a different ball game after he was slapped with charges of physical injuries by two people who accused him of attacking them in Mandaluyong City yesterday. Police said he also tried to resist arrest.

One of his victims, however, ABS-CBN television reporter Gretchen Malalad, managed to punch Alvarez in the face after he allegedly elbowed her and grabbed her by the hair when she tried to interview him.

Malalad, who holds a black belt in karate, had won gold medals in the Southeast Asian Games.

Alvarez's other victim, Wilfredo Cabanlit, 46, a taxi driver, was not as fortunate.

He was sporting a huge bump between the eyes aside from bruises and cuts on his face when he went to the police.

The charges against Alvarez were filed in the Mandaluyong City Prosecutor's Office.

Investigator PO2 Edmundo Fabela said the former Philippine Basketball Association player flagged down Cabanlit's taxi at the Rembrandt Hotel in Quezon City at about 5 a.m.

Cabanlit said Alvarez, who smelled of liquor, angrily accused him to trying to jack up his taxi fare by taking Boni Avenue, the longer route, instead of Shaw Boulevard, on his way to Quiapo, Manila.

When the taxi driver said he was only trying to avoid getting caught in traffic, Alvarez swore at him and kicked him, according to the police report.

As Cabanlit got out of his cab to avoid the suspect's blows, Alvarez ran after him, hitting him in the face and chest, at times with a beer bottle, the victim said.

Witnesses took both to the police station where Malalad tried to interview Alvarez who refused.

When she approached Cabanlit, Alvarez elbowed her in the face and pulled her hair, prompting her to punch his face.

Alvarez and his lawyer, Godfrey Camaligan, refused to talk to the media about the incident.

Alvarez later posted a bail bond of P4,500 and was released from police custody at 4 p.m.

SET UP & MANAGE EFFECTIVELY YOUR NGO OR FOUNDATION SEMINAR, AUG. 29, 2007. Topics: Organizing; Complete project cycle overview; Sourcing your funding, technical assistance & in-kind donation; Best practices & techniques; Sustainability. Venue: Richville Hotel, 286 EDSA, Mandaluyong City, 1-5 PM. To register, call Tritium Knowledge Center Publishing: 531-0084, 578-9833, 0919-229-9777; 0919-229-9780; 0915-780-4379 or email: tritium@pldtdsl.net or tkcp_ph@yahoo.com. Limited seats only. Register Now!

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Rains prevent opening of Quezon underpass as scheduled this month

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE INCESSANT RAINS CAUSED by three consecutive typhoons over the past weeks have hindered the scheduled opening of the pedestrian underpass linking the Quezon City Hall to the Quezon Memorial Circle.

City Engineer Joselito Cabungcal earlier announced that the underpass would be opened before Aug. 15.

"We are just waiting for Mayor (Feliciano) Sonny Belmonte to set the date for the inauguration and the opening of the pedestrian underpass which could be anytime soon," he told the INQUIRER.

"We are just putting the finishing touches to the project," Cabungcal added. The P87 million project is composed of two phases: The first called for the completion of the tunnel while the second phase involved the construction of the entrance and exit areas.

"Joggers, senior citizens and families who wish to spend the day at the Circle can finally pass safely through the underpass," the city official said in an earlier interview.

Cabungcal added that while the underpass would not be air-conditioned, it would have a high ceiling to allow cool air to flow through the structure.

There would also be an elevator for the use of the disabled, he added.

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), hereby invites all interested Government Electronic Procurement System (G-EPS) registered security providers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the procurement of the following:

Name of Location	Procurement of Security Services for NMP
Location	Cabalawan, Tacloban City
Brief Description	To provide security services to NMP Tacloban Complex with 20 licensed Security Guards
Approved Budget for the Contract	Two Million Four Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 2,400,000.00)
Contract Duration	One (1) year

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with the value of the largest contract at least fifty percent (50%) of the approved budget of the herein project for bidding and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for prosecution thereof. The list of minimum requirements is indicated in the Instruction to Bidders. The Eligibility check/screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations-A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE/TIME/VENUE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	23-24, 27-31 August 2007
2. Pre-Bid Conference	3 September 2007, 2 P.M., NMP Conference Room, Cabalawan, Tacloban City
3. Submission of Eligibility Requirements	17 September 2007, 9 A.M., NMP Conference Room, Cabalawan, Tacloban City
4. Opening of Bids	17 September 2007, 9:30 A.M., NMP Conference Room, Cabalawan, Tacloban City

Bids documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00) to the NMP Cashier.

Only the bids of eligible bidders shall be opened in the presence of the bidders or their duly authorized representative, as evidenced by the Special Power of Attorney or Board Resolution. The Opening of bids shall be done right after the checking of the eligibility requirements. Only bids from prospective bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened.

The National Maritime Polytechnic (NMP) reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any minor defects therein, to annul the bidding process, to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s), and to accept only the offer that is most advantageous to the government.

The NMP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) ENGR. ANICETO S. TUMALAD
Acting Chairman, NMP-BAC

(PDI – August 22, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Jin Lee	Pre-Auditor
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Qingqi Hu	Buzz HR Customer
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Jinbeom Park	Pre-Auditor
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Gyutae Kim	Customer Interface Associate
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Molly Niu Dee	Payroll Process Lead
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Jin Young Jung	Buzz HR Customer
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES INC 18/F Cyber One Bldg.II, Eastwood City, Cyberpark Eastwood, Libis, Quezon City	Taekyu Shin	Pre-Auditor
EASTERN HAWAII LEISURE COMPANY LIMITED G/F Grand Blvd. Hotel, 1990 Roxas Blvd., Malate, Manila	Han Yu	Cashier
EASTERN HAWAII LEISURE COMPANY LIMITED G/F Grand Blvd. Hotel, 1990 Roxas Blvd., Malate, Manila	Yanhong Duan	Cashier
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Peng Kwong Chen	Accounts Officer
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Jiashi Wu	IT Support Staff
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Wei Haing Lau	Accounts Officer
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Jun Hung Lee	Accounts Officer
CASPO INCORPORATED 20/F Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City	Han Yao Ang	Accounts Officer
PRO-LOG PHILIPPINES, INC. Unit 8, JJM Bldg., 2 NAIA Sucat, Paranaque City	Clint Dean Walker	Managing Director
MAHARAJA-PHILS ASIAN GAMING INC. 3/F Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Kee Kia Lim	Manager
IT-TERA PHILS. INC. 4/F Pacific Star Bldg., Sen. Gil Puyat cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Jungo Yashima	Vice President

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

The DOLE-NCR will hold a Pre-Regional Human Resource Conference Workshop in the areas of education and training, human relations and labor relations on August 24, 2007. Interested employers/companies are invited to participate. You may call 3382018, 3038823 for more details.

RAYMUNDO G. AGRAVANTE
OIC, Regional Director

(PDI–August 22, 2007)

Prosecution, defense junk plea bargain in Leviste aide killing

By DJ Yap

BOTH THE PROSECUTION AND THE DEFENSE in the case involving former Batangas Gov. Jose Antonio Leviste and his slain aide have rejected all possibility of a plea bargain as the case moves to pre-trial stage next month.

"A plea bargain would mean our client pleading guilty to a lesser charge. But our position has always been that our client is innocent," Henry Capela, one of Leviste's lawyers, said yesterday.

Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco was also not in favor of a plea bargain, although his position was the opposite. "The prosecution will not want to plea bargain because we are confident that we can prove he is guilty of murder," he said.

Earlier, Judge Elmo Alameda of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 150 junked Velasco's motion asking him to reconsider his decision to grant bail to Leviste, who stands accused of killing his longtime aide, Rafael de las Alas, on Jan. 12.

In a two-page order, Alameda said the prosecution had failed to show sufficient evidence that Leviste's guilt was strong "to foreclose accused's right to bail." But he clarified that the case against Leviste was still murder, and not homicide, as his lawyers had been pushing for.

"To put the record in its proper perspective, the court did not make a categorical statement that the case at hand should be treated as a simple homicide and not murder," Alameda said.

"Nowhere in the questioned order did the court rule that the crime committed by the accused on the basis of the evidence presented by the prosecution during the bail hearing is that of homicide and not murder," he added.

Alameda set the pre-trial conference on Sept. 26 "to consider the possibility of plea bargaining, to assist the parties in reaching a settlement of the civil aspect of the case."

But in separate interviews, Capela and Manuel Singson, Leviste's other counsel, said a plea bargain was unnecessary because the prosecution did not have sufficient evidence to show that Leviste killed De las Alas.

Velasco, on the other hand, said the prosecution was "ready" for trial and had no plan of entering into a plea bargain with the accused. He added that he had not received a copy of Alameda's order denying his motion for reconsideration, which questioned the granting of bail to Leviste.

In his motion, Velasco had said the three elements of murder—treachery, premeditation, and cruelty—were present in the De las Alas killing. On May 23, Alameda granted Leviste's petition to post bail, saying the prosecution had failed to present sufficient evidence that Leviste's guilt was strong. He was released after posting a P300,000 bail bond.

Truck firm official robbed of payroll money

By Jeannette I. Andrade

FOUR MOTORCYCLE-RIDING MEN robbed a trucking company official of P150,000 in payroll money in Quezon City yesterday afternoon.

Supt. Jose Garcia, of Quezon City Police District Station 8, identified the victim as Jason Bartolome, executive vice president of the Fairway Trucking Co.

The incident happened at 1:04 p.m. yesterday on Calle Industria, Barangay Bagumbayan in Project. 4.

Bartolome was aboard his white Toyota Hi-Lux and had just withdrawn money from a bank in Libis when he noticed that four men riding tandem on two motorcycles were following him.

According to the police, Bartolome stepped on the accelerator to shake off the suspects, but the four men pulled out handguns and shot at his vehicle.

Bartolome's pickup was hit by several bullets, but he was unharmed.

The four men caught up with Bartolome on Calle Industria.

Then, the victim was ordered at gunpoint to open the door of his vehicle.

The suspects immediately grabbed the P150,000 in cash Bartolome had just withdrawn from the bank and fled in the direction of Pasig City.

Probe of Tullahan Bridge rehabilitation urged

By Nancy C. Carvajal

TWO LAWMAKERS YESTERDAY said they would file a resolution to investigate alleged anomalies in the ongoing rehabilitation of the Tullahan Bridge in Valenzuela City.

Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla and Valenzuela City Rep. Rex Gatchalian were at the construction site in the morning to inspect the repair work on the 73-year-old bridge.

Both later said they would file separate resolutions in Congress calling for the investigation of Joselito Rigor, chief of the Department of Public Works and Highways National Capital Region office, and R C Ramos Construction Co., the project contractor.

"There could be connivance between government officials and the construction company for these anomalies to take place," Revilla told reporters.

Gatchalian added that the bridge contractor had been previously blacklisted by the city government reportedly in connection with a project that was found to be overpriced.

"This is a disaster waiting to happen and the people of Valenzuela City have suffered enough due to the delays in the completion of the project," he said.

Revilla, who chairs the Senate public works committee, claimed the contractor changed the original design and specifications of the project without the approval of the DPWH, the project's lead agency.

He added that the project's original bidding cost of P60.53 million was even raised to P63 million despite the delay in construction work.

The project was originally set to be completed on May 31.

METRO BRIEFS

Lim: Find truck owner

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim yesterday ordered the Manila Police District to find the owner of the abandoned truck in a pay parking lot in Sta. Cruz that yielded about P200 million worth of chemicals reportedly used to make shabu. A check of the vehicle's license plate (WKG 622), showed that it was owned by Lovo Oriental Corp. in Makati City. The vehicle was left in the parking lot by a man identified as Mark Chua. Lim said it was important to find the vehicle's owner to know where they got the chemicals and what they intended to use it for.

Allison W. Lopez

Gotcha!

THE LONG arm of the law finally caught up with a wanted man in Taguig City on Sunday after a tip from informants led to his arrest. Jhonnel Osorio, who has standing arrest warrants for robbery and car theft, was apprehended on Gen. Luna Street in Barangay Tuktukan. The suspect, who had been in hiding for two weeks, was spotted in Barangay Wawa by informants who immediately informed the authorities, Taguig police chief Supt. Alfred Corpus said. Acting on the tip, policemen led by PO3 Rogelio Sernat, chief of the Warrant and Subpoena Section, conducted a manhunt with PO2 Fernando Carlos, a Pasay City policeman who lives in the area. As they were about to arrest the suspect, he hurriedly flagged down a passenger jeepney. A brief chase ensued which ended in the suspect's arrest.

DJ Yap

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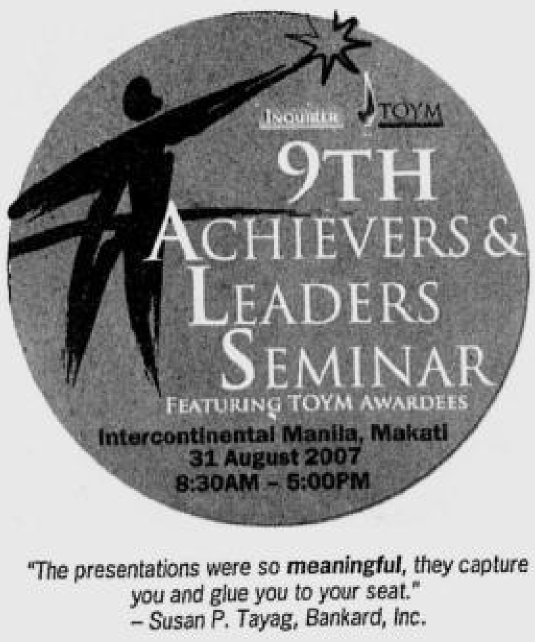

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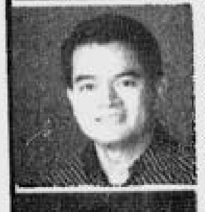
Learn from 2006 TOYM Awardee, popular speaker & best-selling author of Thank God He's the Boss! (& many others) Bo Sanchez, the key leadership and success principles from the mistakes that Bo has made in his life and how he leveraged these to become one of the most successful authors, publishers, and lay ministers in the country today.

Maria Ressa
Leading with Excellence. Raising the bench marks while rising above office politics.
How do you lead when you've been given the task to change the culture of your organization? Listen and learn from Ressa's experience as she shares her story on how she led an organization to rise above their differences and accept a new vision of professionalism.

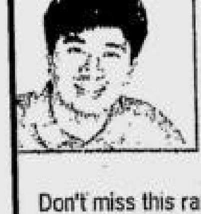
Vivienne Tan
Changing The Mindset of the New Generation.
Vivienne is a young and dynamic entrepreneur. She established the Entrepreneur School of Asia, Asia's first college dedicated entirely for the research and education of entrepreneurship and has been operating her education enterprise for the past eight (8) years.



Louie Benedict Hernandez
Leading local, thinking global.
2006 TOYM Awardee, Hernandez is the Vice President and General Manager (Philippine-region operations) of eTelecare. His company practically opened up the country's international outsourced call center sector that now generates dollar revenues and employment to thousands. Today, eTelecare is the first Filipino call center to be listed in the NASDAQ.

Dr. Raquel Fortun
Leadership and passion. Dedication to your calling.
Love it or leave it. That's 2002 TOYM Awardee Fortun's advise when it comes to your work and your career. Be inspired by the story of how the country's top forensic pathologist (our version of CSI), made dificult career decisions in her life.

Rico Hizon
Leading in a cross-cultural environment.
TOYM Awardee 2006. Rico Hizon produces, reports & presents the live daily business and finance programme Asia Business Report on BBC World. Dealing with different personalities and a team with different cultures and backgrounds has given Rico a wider perspective and global leadership wisdom.



Butch Jimenez
Duplication. The Leader as Mentor.
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2002 TOYM Awardee and PLDT top executive Butch Jimenez shares how he mentors and leads his team by example and how crucial a winning attitude is when leading. Butch is the head of the TOYM Foundation & is better known for his ground breaking work as producer of Rizal, Muro-Ami & Death Row.

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Rescuers give up hope of finding more survivors from Peru quake

PISCO—PERU TURNED TO cleanup and reconstruction on Monday after rescue workers said there was no hope of finding more survivors in the devastation from the magnitude-8 earthquake that killed more than 500 people last week.

Cleaning the streets and rebuilding are now the top priorities, President Alan Garcia said on Monday in Lima, where he returned after three nights in the disaster zone. A government agency will oversee reconstruction of cities destroyed along Peru's southern coast.

"I estimate that in 15 days we will have cleared not only the streets of Pisco but also the rubble from the lots where the houses were," he said, adding that families could then decide whether to put up tents or begin immediate construction of new homes.

Garcia said plans include providing small two-bedroom homes to people who lost their houses. They would be made with concrete blocks and steel rods, which can withstand earthquakes better than unreinforced adobe.

He said survivors might receive financial assistance to build the homes or construction materials from the Housing Ministry.

Wednesday's quake killed at least 540 people, injured 1,500 and leveled adobe buildings all over the region. More than 85 percent of homes in Pisco, a fishing port 200 kilometers southeast of Lima, collapsed. Rescuers said on Monday there was "no hope" of finding anyone else alive in the rubble.

The Civil Defense said in a preliminary report that the quake destroyed 35,214 homes—including 16,000 in Pisco and 16,010 in nearby Chincha. Another 4,053 houses were badly damaged, it said.

"We've stopped the rescue work," said Jorge Vera, a firefighter who led the operation to find survivors at the San Clemente church in Pisco. "We're now working to recover the bodies."

And Rafael Loza, who used an infrared camera to find survivors, said "there's no hope in finding anyone alive." He said the dust generated when the flimsy adobe buildings crumbled would have choked anyone still stuck in the rubble.

Friday was the last time a survivor was pulled from the quake's debris in Pisco.

Fire department official Guillermo Merino said 148 bodies had been removed from the debris of the church that came crashing down. It was not clear how many of the 300 congregants survived the shaking that lasted an agonizing two minutes.

Local media reported late Sunday that a 12-year-old boy in the nearby village of Guadalupe was killed when a wall of his house fell on top of him during an aftershock that the US Geological Survey measured as magnitude 5.6.

The Vatican on Monday joined other international donors, saying it had sent $200,000 in aid for the victims.

Garcia said aid was arriving, but some said they were still waiting for help. *AP*

Egypt finds oldest human footprint

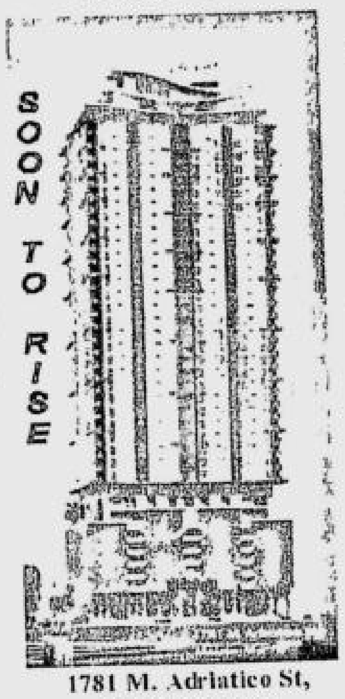
CAIRO—EGYPTIAN ARchaeologists have found what they said could be the oldest human footprint in history in the country's western desert, the Arab country's antiquities' chief said on Monday.

"This could go back about two million years," said Zahi Hawass, the secretary general of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities. "It could be the most important discovery in Egypt," he told Reuters.

Archaeologists found the footprint, imprinted on mud and then hardened into rock, while exploring a prehistoric site in Siwa, a desert oasis.

Scientists are using carbon tests on plants found in the rock to determine its exact age, Hawass said.

Khaled Saad, the director of prehistory at the council, said that based on the age of the rock where the footprint was found, it could date back even further than the renowned 3-million year-old fossil Lucy, the partial skeleton of an ape-man, found in Ethiopia in 1974. *Reuters*



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WORLDBRIEFS

Iraqi governor killed

BAGHDAD—An Iraqi provincial governor was blown up by a roadside bomb on Monday in what appeared to be an escalation of a power struggle between rival Shiite factions that threatens to destabilize the oil-producing south. Mohammed Ali al-Hassani, governor of Muthanna province, was on his way from his home in the city of Rumaitha to Samawa, the provincial capital, when his convoy of nine cars was hit by a powerful roadside bomb, provincial officials said. One bodyguard was also killed and two others wounded. *Reuters*

NZ probes Chinese clothes

WELLINGTON—The New Zealand government said on Tuesday it was investigating the safety of imported clothing from China and other countries following concerns that it contained dangerous levels of chemicals. The Ministry of Consumer Affairs said the investigation had been launched after a local television program found woolen and cotton fabrics imported from China contained levels of formaldehyde up to 900 times the safety limit set by the World Health Organization. Formaldehyde, used by some clothing manufacturers to prevent mildew, can cause skin irritations, respiratory problems and even cancer if exposed to high levels of the chemical. *Reuters*

103 detainees freed

BAGHDAD—At least 103 detainees held without charge in US-run prisons in Iraq have been freed over the past few weeks after an Iraqi committee found them innocent, a senior Iraqi official told AFP on Monday. The detainees, some of them foreign Arab nationals, were set free after their cases were studied by the Committee to Review Detainees in Multinational Forces' Prisons, a panel set up by Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in May. "We have released 103 detainees who were held in the prisons run by multinational forces in Iraq," said Basam Ridha, advisor to Maliki and member of the committee. *AFP*

Floods kill 80

KOLKATA, INDIA—Fresh floods in eastern India and Bangladesh have killed another 80 people, including two men on a motorbike who were electrocuted when they hit a cable in a flooded street, officials said on Tuesday. Many victims drowned, died from diseases spread by dirty water or were killed by snakebites after the fresh rains in a region already exhausted by more than a month of flood chaos. More than 1,700 Indians, Nepalis and Bangladeshis have been killed in the last few weeks of monsoon flooding. Hundreds of thousands of people across the region remain marooned or homeless. *Reuters*

Utah miners feared dead

LOS ANGELES—The families of six Utah miners buried underground two weeks ago have been warned their loved ones are most likely dead and may never be found, officials said on Monday. Robert Murray, the owner of the Genwal Mine in Crandall Canyon, told reporters he had delivered the grim verdict to anxious families after rescue efforts remained halted following the deaths of three workers last week. "I was very forthright," Murray said. "Their reception with me was not good, but at some point the reality must sink in." The six men were entombed in the mine, which is situated in remote mountain region some 200 kilometers southeast of Salt Lake City, on Aug. 6 following a tunnel collapse. *AFP*

Gamers' world reveals next possible epidemic

WASHINGTON—A PLAGUE carried around the world by travelers, pets and curious teenagers may show that experts have not taken everything into account when planning for an outbreak of disease, researchers said on Monday.

Luckily, the world involved is an Internet game.

The outbreak of "Corrupted Blood" indicates that specialists trying to predict what the next pandemic will look like might make use of a real-world laboratory—the culture of online gamers.

"It really looked quite a bit like a real disease," Nina Fefferman of Princeton University, who worked on the report with her then-student Eric Lofgren, said in a telephone interview.

This includes stupid behavior, near-instant international travel and infection by pets.

The outbreak was an accidental consequence of a software challenge added to the "World of Warcraft" game in 2005, Fefferman and Lofgren report in the journal Lancet Infectious Diseases.

The virulent, contagious disease was introduced by maker Blizzard Entertainment Inc. of Irvine, California, as an extra challenge to high-level players. But, just as a real virus might spread, it was accidentally carried out of its virtual containment area.

"Soon, the disease had spread to the densely populated capital cities of the fantasy world, causing high rates of mortality and, much more importantly, the social chaos that comes from a large-scale outbreak of deadly disease," Fefferman and Lofgren wrote.

"When this accidental outbreak happened, players embraced it. Some thought it was really cool," Fefferman said.

The makers did not. They reset the computer game to eliminate the disease, wiping out any data that may have been collected.

But Lofgren, who played the game, alerted Fefferman, and they studied what they could. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
Baguio Economic Zone, Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. Nos. 447-3331; 447-3683; 447-3328; 447-3329; 447-3333
Telefax: 447-3330

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANT (STP) FACILITY FOR THE BAGUIO CITY ECONOMIC ZONE

1. The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA)-Baguio City Economic Zone (BCEZ), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2007 intends to apply the sum of **Php 1,875,819.20 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)** to payment for the Operation and Maintenance of the Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) Facility of PEZA-BCEZ. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The PEZA now invites eligible Bidders to bid for the Operation and Maintenance of the Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) Facility of PEZA-BCEZ. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the PEZA-BCEZ and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours, Mondays to Fridays.
5: A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **29 August to 5 September 2007**, Mondays to Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00 and submission of a certified copy of their G-EPS Certificate of Registration. The method of payment will be cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **September 5, 2007 at 10:00 a.m.** at the 3rd floor, Conference Room, Administration Building, BCEZ-PEZA, Loakan Road, Baguio City.
7. In addition, bidders must have filed their latest annual income and business tax returns (VAT and/or Percentage Taxes covering six (6) months immediately prior to the submission of bids) via the **Electronic Filing system (eFPS)**, of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.
8. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **9:30 A.M. of September 17, 2007.** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of not less than *1% of the ABC.* Late Bids shall not be accepted.
9. Bid opening shall be on **September 17, 2007, 10:00 A.M.** at the 3rd Floor, Conference Room, Administration Building, BCEZ-PEZA, Loakan Road, Baguio City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
10. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.
11. The PEZA-BCEZ assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat
2nd Floor, Administration Building,
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. No. (074) 447-3683, Fax (074) 447-3330
email: bcez@nitro.com.ph

(Sgd.) ATTY. RENE U. BAYSA
BCEZ-BAC Chairman

(PDI - August 15 & 22, 2007)

POWER SECTOR
ASSETS & LIABILITIES
MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

INVITATION TO BID

The Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corporation *("PSALM")* Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee (the *"Committee")* invites interested parties to participate in and bid for the privatization of the following:

The Hydroelectric Power Complex consisting of the 75 MW Ambuklao Hydroelectric Power Plant located at Bokod, Benguet and the 100 MW Binga Hydroelectric Power Plant located at Itogon, Benguet

(the "Asset"). The Asset is being privatized on an "as is where is" basis and will include a power supply allocation.

Interested parties must submit a Letter of Interest (*"LOI"*) to the Committee which shall state the full name, address, telephone and fax number of the interested party, name of the principal contact, and signed by an authorized representative. All LOIs must be received by the Committee at the PSALM Office with address at the 7th Floor Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, not later than **5:00 p.m. on 14 September 2007** (the *"LOI Submission Deadline"*). Only interested parties that submit an LOI by the LOI Submission Deadline shall be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

As a prerequisite to the receipt of the Bidding Package, interested parties shall execute a Confidentiality Agreement and an Undertaking pursuant to Section 78 of RA 9136, both in the forms provided by PSALM, and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of One Thousand U.S. Dollars (U.S.$ 1,000.00) (the *"Participation Fee"*). The Participation Fee shall either be in cash, manager's check or cashier's check. All bank charges, if any, shall either be for the account of the interested party. The Confidentiality Agreement, Undertaking, and Participation Fee must be received by the Committee on or before **5:00 p.m.** on **18 September 2007** to entitle an interested party further participation in the privatization of the Asset.

The Bidding Package which includes the Bidding Procedures shall be issued during office hours (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) from **5 September** until **19 September 2007** (the *"Deadline"*) at the PSALM Office. Only interested parties who have been issued the Bidding Package by the Deadline or consortium (as described below) will be allowed to participate further in the privatization of the Asset.

Interested parties that submit the LOI must be the party that will participate in the privatization process, submit a bid and enter into the pertinent agreements. Once an interested party submits the Confidentiality Agreement and Undertaking and pays the Participation Fee, such interested party may no longer be substituted in the privatization process, except through a consortium in accordance with the terms and conditions of the Bidding Procedures, among the requirements of which are (i) such interested party must own at least a majority of the shares outstanding and entitled to vote in such consortium; (ii) the consortium must be a juridical entity; and (iii) a letter requesting to bid through consortium must be submitted to the Committee on or before the deadline set for the same in the Bidding Procedures.

The schedule of the bidding activities shall be as follows:

Due Diligence : 27 August 2007 to 21 November 2007
Pre-Bid Conference : 26 September 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the PSALM Office
Bid Submission Deadline : 28 November, 12:00 noon at the PSALM Office

References to the dates and times shall be based on Manila time. Should any of the above dates fall on a holiday, the deadline shall be extended to the same time of the immediately succeeding business day in Makati City.

A two-envelope bidding system will be adopted. Interested Parties will be required to post a bid security equivalent to Two Million Five Hundred Thousand U.S. Dollars (U.S.$ 2,500,000.00) in the form of an irrevocable letter of credit which must be accepted to the Committee. The bid security of the winning bidder shall be substituted by a performance security to guaranty prompt, faithful and complete performance of its obligations under the transaction. The details of the privatization of the Asset are contained in the Bidding Package.

Letters of Interest, Confidentiality Agreements and Undertakings shall be addressed and submitted to: The Chairman, Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee, PSALM Corporation, 7th Floor, Bankmer Building, 6756 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Philippines. Inquiries and clarifications shall be addressed to Mr. Froilan A. Tampinco at the PSALM Office or at telefax number (632) 892-6029 or e-mail address fatampinco@psalm.gov.ph.

The Committee reserves the right to accept or reject any interested party or bidder or proposals or bids therefrom, or any part thereof, and/or to waive any defects contained therein and accept the offer advantageous to the Government, without offering any reason whatsoever. It does not assume any obligation to compensate or indemnify parties for any expense or loss that they may incur as a result of their participation in the privatization process, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made. Finally, it reserves the right to modify, supplement, or change the Bidding Procedures and other aspects of the privatization process at any time, including the schedule and the venue provided herein, for any reason whatsoever and without giving prior notice. Interested parties and/or bidders will be notified subsequently of such modifications, supplements, or changes.

(Sgd.) **ANGELO T. REYES**
Chairman
PSALM Privatization, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI—Aug. 20, 21 & 22, 2007)

15 former Saddam aides go on trial

BAGHDAD—FIFTEEN FORMER AIDES OF EXECUTED Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, including the man known as "Chemical Ali," went on trial on Tuesday for crimes against humanity over their alleged role in the crushing of a 1991 Shiite rebellion.

Three of the accused, including Ali Hassan al-Majid, Saddam's cousin who is widely known as Chemical Ali, have already been sentenced to death in a previous trial for genocide and crimes against humanity.

Majid was among the first to enter the Iraqi High Tribunal, dressed in a cream colored robe with a white headscarf and supported by a cane.

When Judge Mohammed al-Oreibi al-Khalifah asked him to introduce himself, he replied, "I am the fighter Ali Hassan al-Majid."

In his opening statement, the chief prosecutor accused Majid of cold-blooded executions while Saddam's southern army was systematically killing tens of thousands of Shiites after they rose up in the wake of the first Gulf War.

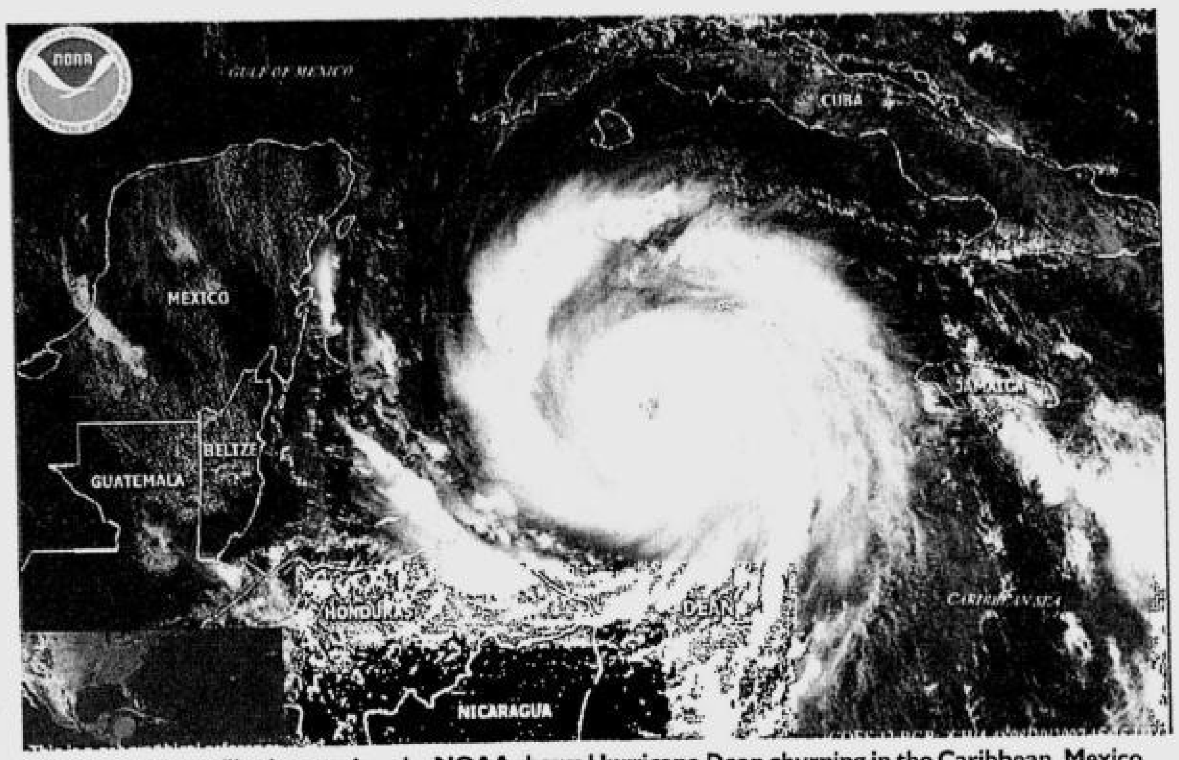
"The helicopters were bombing the cities and houses of people. Prisoners captured were killed," the prosecutor said.

"Majid used to come to detention centers, tie the hands of the detainees and then shoot them dead with his weapon. The dead were then later buried in mass graves. Many mass graves have been found since the 2003 war ended. And we will find many more if we keep searching." Prosecutors claim that up to 100,000 Shiites were killed when Saddam's loyalists put down the so-called "1991 Intifada (Uprising)," launched by deserting soldiers retreating from their defeat in Kuwait and local citizens.

The massacres occurred around the holy Shiite cities of Najaf and Karbala and in the Hilla and Basra regions, after the US-led coalition decided to halt its offensive just inside Iraq.

"Saddam lost control of most southern governorates. Saddam turned his face south," the prosecutor said. "He ordered tanks and infantry withdrawn from Kuwait to attack Basra and Maysa. The convict Saddam made rash judgements. Majid was authorized to demolish anything and kill anyone who came in the way of the forces." Shiites, a minority in the Muslim world, make up 60 percent of Iraq's population and were ruled for decades by Saddam's Sunni-led regime.

Since the March 2003 US-led invasion, Iraqi and international experts have exhumed dozens of mass graves of victims killed in the uprising, and their reports are expected to be the key evidence during the trial. *AFP*



THIS Aug. 20 satellite image given by NOAA shows Hurricane Dean churning in the Caribbean. Mexico evacuated resorts and oil rigs as the hurricane reached "potentially catastrophic" category five strength, unleashing monstrous winds and lashing rains over the Caribbean on Tuesday. AFP

Monstrous hurricane slams into Mexico; oil rigs evacuated

CANCUN—HURRICANE DEAN on Tuesday slammed into the Caribbean coast of Mexico with "potentially catastrophic" category-five force, lashing the Yucatan Peninsula with monstrous winds and pounding rains.

Mexico evacuated resorts and oil rigs as the killer storm whipped up maximum sustained winds of 270 kilometers per hour with higher gusts, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said.

The eye of the storm "made landfall on the east coast of the Yucatan Peninsula near Costa Maya or Majahual around 3:30 a.m. ... about 65 km east-northeast of Chetumal, Mexico," it said.

Storm surge flooding and high tides of 4 to 6 meters above normal tide levels along with large and dangerous battering waves" were possible in the areas near and to the north of landfall.

Tourist resorts were abandoned and most residents had fled for safer ground by the time the outer bands of the storm began bearing down late Monday with heavy rains and high winds.

Authorities nonetheless heaved a sigh of relief as forecasters said Cancun and other popular resorts along Mexico's Caribbean coast would likely be spared a direct hit.

Dean struck land further south, on the border with Belize near Chetumal, 300 km away from the popular tourist resort of Cancun.

Authorities also deployed about 1,000 police officers to prevent the type of looting that followed the devastation wrought by Wilma, a category five hurricane that killed 10 people and caused millions of dollars in damage in Cancun two years ago. *AFP*

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Anger mounts as hopes dim for 181 trapped China miners

XINTAI—CHINESE AUTHORITIES on Tuesday tried to placate anguished relatives of 181 men trapped in flooded coal mine shafts with little hope of survival as accusations spread of official failures and censorship.

The miners have been trapped since Friday when a river dyke burst in torrential rain, sending water rushing into two mine shafts in the eastern province of Shandong—a main one where 172 miners were working and another nearby where there were nine.

Rescuers continued frantic efforts to pump the mines dry in the faint hope that some of those trapped were still alive.

"For those family members of miners who rushed to the site, the local government is actively working to settle them in accommodation and has brought people to greet and console them in order to safeguard order and stability in the coal mining area," said a notice on the central government's website (www.gov.cn).

Relatives of missing miners on Monday stormed the offices of Huayuan Mining Co., which runs the bigger shaft, smashing windows and accusing managers of not telling families what was happening.

Even some of China's state-run newspapers cast aside restraint to criticize authorities.

"This seems to be a natural disaster, but when such natural disasters happen so often they cannot be just blamed on the pitilessness of nature," said the China Youth Daily.

As criticism mounted, government attempts to gain control over the story intensified.

Reporters traveling to a nearby village to interview miners' families were stopped by local security personnel who asked, "What are you doing? You will only aggravate social conflicts."

Foreign reporters were tailed and local reporters began leaving the site, saying they had been called back by their editors, who in turn were acting on orders of the Central Propaganda Department. *Reuters*

Iran, IAEA resume talks to end nuclear dispute

TEHRAN—IRAN AND THE UN nuclear agency watchdog went into a second day of talks in Tehran on Tuesday aimed at helping to defuse a row over Tehran's disputed atomic work which the West suspects is aimed at making bombs.

Negotiators were due to announce the outcome of discussions at a news conference later on Tuesday, Iran's semi-official Mehr News Agency said, without indicating when.

Iran agreed in June to draw up an action plan within 60 days to grant more access to its nuclear sites for inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Two previous rounds of talks were held in July and earlier this month. Iranian officials have described those discussions as positive and constructive.

Diplomats say Iran is showing signs of more cooperation to try to ward off the threat of broader UN penalties following two sanctions resolutions since December, mainly targeting individuals and companies linked to the nuclear activities.

But the United States, leading international efforts to isolate Tehran, insists it must also suspend uranium enrichment as a precondition for broader talks on economic and trade incentives, something Iran has repeatedly refused to do.

Iranian officials say they expect the IAEA to highlight their cooperation in its next report due by early September on Iran's atomic program, which could determine whether it faces more UN sanctions.

Iranian chief nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani said on Monday Iran would retaliate if hit by more punitive measures, without describing a specific response. Iran has previously reduced cooperation with the IAEA when more sanctions were imposed.

Iran insists its atomic plans are aimed at making electricity so that it can export more of its oil and gas. *Reuters*

WHAT'S INSIDE

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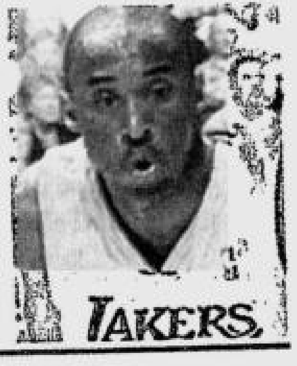
☐ **NBA Stars** shoot for Olympic spot /A26



NCAA: Lion Aljamal's fate hangs

By Roy Luarca and Marc Anthony Reyes

THE THUNDEROUS ROAR OF THE SAN Beda Red Lions in the NCAA men's basketball tournament may yet be reduced to a whimper.

STANDINGS	W	L
*-San Beda	8	1
y-Letran	7	2
Jose Rizal	6	3
Mapua	5	6
S. Sebastian	4	5
Perpetual	2	7
St. Benilde	1	9

*-assured of Final Four slot
y-assured of Final 4 playoff

GAMES TODAY
(*The Arena, San Juan*)
11:30 a.m.—Jose Rizal vs San Beda (Jrs)
2 p.m.—Jose Rizal vs San Beda (Srs)
4 p.m.—St. Benilde vs Mapua (Srs)

This developed yesterday after the league's management committee (Mancom) disqualified a key player—Yousif Aljamal—from playing in the Lions' remaining games, including San Beda's 2 p.m. tussle against resurgent Jose Rizal at 2 p.m. today at The Arena in San Juan.

The 6-foot-4 Aljamal was penalized for allegedly failing to notify the Mancom of his inclusion in the PBA Rookie Draft held last Sunday, where he was chosen as the 8th pick by Air21 but shipped to Talk 'N Text.

San Beda rector-president Rev. Fr. Mateo de Jesus strongly protested the Mancom decision and appealed to the NCAA policy board to nullify Aljamal's disqualification.

The policy board, made up of representatives from the member schools, is set to act on Aljamal's case before today's triplebill capped by the Mapua-St. Benilde clash at 4 p.m.

"There is no clear-cut policy or any written ruling that an NCAA player who wishes to be part of the PBA needs to secure the permission of the NCAA's Mancom," said De Jesus in a press statement. "This decision of the Mancom is clearly unfair and one-sided, and quite contrary to the spirit of collegiality that the NCAA seeks to foster.

"This episode could create the misperception that the NCAA is, in fact, not supportive of its players seeking to move up to the professional ranks."

The defending champion Lions have won their last three games en route to a pacesetting 8-win, 1-loss record and a berth in the Final Four. They advanced ahead of the idle Letran Knights, who are assured of a playoff for a semifinal slot at 7-2.

The third-running Heavy Bombers (6-3) are looking to put a foot inside the Final Four when they tackle the Lions.

Even JRU coach Ariel Vanguardia is surprised by his wards' five-game winning run.

"We have discovered the fire within us and that showed in how we played in the past five games," said Vanguardia after his wards disposed of Perpetual Help, 65-62, last Aug. 8. "Things are going well for us right now."

A lone juniors game pitting the Lighties against the Red Cubs at 11:30 a.m. completes the day's schedule.

The Cardinals (5-6) try to close out their elimination schedule with a victory that would give Mapua at least a rubber match for the last Final Four slot.

A loss will jeopardize Mapua's chances because it could no longer get a sixth win which idle San Sebastian (4-5) can still achieve.

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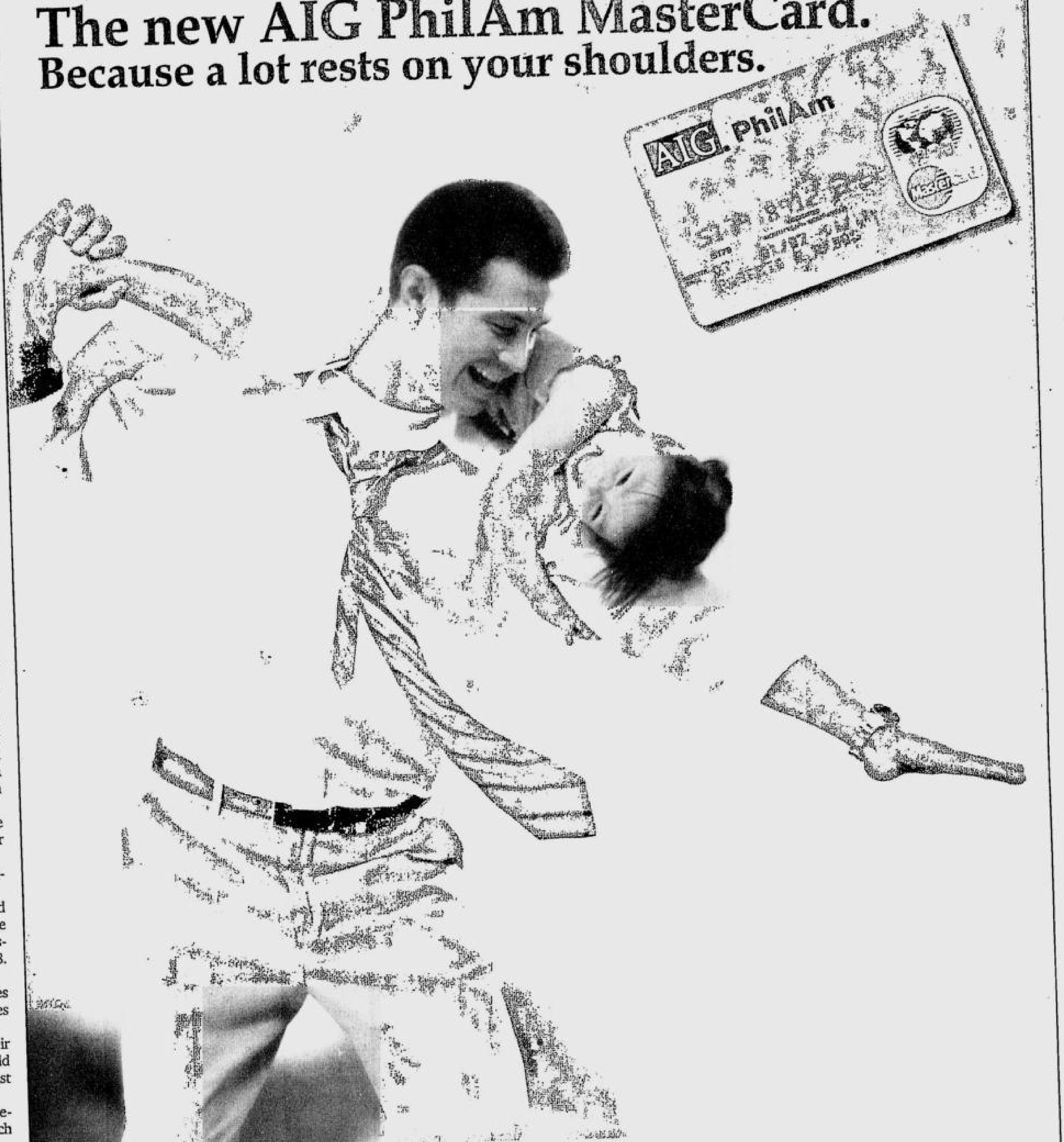

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Piccio grabs Malaysia lead after 67

PICCIO: I shot

MIA PICCIO SIZZLED WITH A BOGEY-free five-under-par 67 Tuesday to wrest the lead from compatriot Chihiro Ikeda halfway through Malaysian Junior Open at the Saujana Golf and Country Club in Kuala Lumpur.

Six shots off the lead overnight, Piccio rattled off three birdies in the front nine then added two more on Nos. 13 and 17 while saving pars in the four times she missed the green. She led Ikeda by one shot on a total of 141.

Ikeda, the first-round leader, bogeyed Nos. 12 and 13 on the way to a 74-142.

With Cyna Rodriguez grabbing third place with a 74-147, the ICTSI-backed Philippine team sets out today for a possible 1-2-3 finish in the 54-hole tourney which drew players from nine countries.

Michelle Ting of Malaysia lay fourth with 148 one in front of taiwan's Diane Luke Jia Zhen (75) and Singapore's Amanda Chin (74).

Bambee dela Paz and Louise Manalo fell behind with 82-158 and 80-159, respectively.

Marcel Puyat fired a 74 and dropped to 13th place at 149, seven shots off Akhmal Tarmizi Nazari (70) and Taiwanese Hsu Hao-sheng (71). Brent Sumampong struggled to a 77 and slipped to 20th at 152.

Welcoat keeping Joe at all costs

By Musong R. Castillo

TIME TO SPLURGE.

That's what Welcoat will be doing in the next few days when management offers No. 1 Draft pick Joe Devance and veteran acquisition Nic Belasco maximum pay allowed by the Philippine Basketball Association.

After winning only seven games in their first two tournaments last season, the Dragons now have a chance to build a tough roster centered on the 6-foot-7 Devance.

"They both deserve what we are prepared to give," co-owner Raymund Yu told the INQUIRER over the phone yesterday.

Devance will get a three-year offer worth a total of P8.544 million.

The third straight Fil-American to be drafted No. 1 will receive P150,000 a month in his first year, P225,000 in his second and P337,000 in his third apart from bonus and performance incentives.

Belasco, meanwhile, will be offered P350,000 a month for the next two years.

Pacquiao works out with wife watching

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

OUR HERO: As Manny Pacquiao pummels the speed bag, the lucky souls allowed in at the Rex "Wakee" Salud Gym, the children included, marvel at their idol's amazing stamina. CDN PHOTO/TONEE DESPOJO

CEBU CITY—WITH WIFE JINKEE WATCHING, MANNY PACquiao breezed through a rigorous three-hour workout yesterday at the Rex "Wakee" Salud gym here, prompting onlookers to declare that the southpaw boxing hero is ready to fight Marco Antonio Barrera even today.

Pacquiao and Barrera are set to trade leathers on Oct. 6 in a rematch of their 2003 battle won by the Filipino by technical knockout in the 11th round.

Jinkee, who arrived at the gym with Pacquiao, trainers Freddie Roach and Buboy Fernandez, looked relaxed throughout the afternoon session where her husband performed his training routine.

"I have to be here, while my baby (10-month-old Mary Divine Grace) is in the hotel," Jinkee said in Cebuano, unmindful of the sweltering heat inside the gym. "My husband also needs attention, you know."

"This is inferno amigo," exclaimed Mexican David Rodela. "Very hot!"

Rodela sparred against Pacquiao on Monday and got some rude welcome when he was momentarily stunned in the third round before being allowed to continue.

Guards succeeded in controlling the entry of visitors unlike in previous days, when fans resorted to climbing a 10-foot wall to watch Pacquiao train.

"We emphasized more power, and more techniques in a six-round mitt session," said Fernandez, while Pacman banged away at the mitts while shouting "Manila Ice."

Today, Pacquiao is set to spar once again against Rodela.

Another Mexican sparmate, Fernando Beltran Jr, is also set to arrive today, while the third sparmate, Speedy Gonzalez, arrives tomorrow.

"We're pretty much ahead of schedule," said trainer Roach after the three-hour session. "Manny is at a point where we want him to be. We're doing some new stuff, and we should be ready when we fly to Los Angeles on Sept. 22."

Roach has been doubling up as a conditioning expert, even waking up very early in the morning to join his ward in his morning runs at the AsiaTown IT Park and Alta Vista Golf and Country Club.

Pacman helps two RP pugs shoot for stars

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES—THE ORIGINAL PLAN was to do it step by step, slowly but surely.

There was no rush, whatsoever.

Vice Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato had never hoped to have any of his young, talented fighters immediately featured in a big Las Vegas card.

Of course, he wanted two or three boxers in his growing stable to follow the footsteps of Manny Pacquiao, who hit it big in the United States after gambling with his career when the chips were down.

But the plan was for these young prospects to first enroll in a tested American training camp, not necessarily at Wild Card here, where they could train and toughen up, before shooting for the stars in glittering Las Vegas.

* * *

The long, winding road to Las Vegas has been drastically cut.

All Piñol had to do was travel to Cebu City, where Pacquiao is deep in training for his Oct. 6 rematch with Mexican Marco Antonio Barrera.

When Piñol emerged from a huddle with Pacquiao, trainer Freddie Roach and international matchmaker Rex "Wakee" Salud on Monday, he was in a joyful, screaming mood.

Pacquiao has seen to it that two top boxers from the Braveheart Stable in Kidapawan City, managed by Piñol in a team-up with Chicago-based Filipino sportsman Rolando Hiso, will fight in the undercard of his rematch with Barrera.

It's his turn to give more promising Filipino boxers a chance to shine in the lucrative American boxing market, Pacquiao was quoted as saying.

* * *

Yesterday, a humbled Piñol was on the phone to confirm that WBO Asia-Pacific interim featherweight champion Glenn Gonzales, 22, and the talented bantamweight Jundy Maraon, 22, will soon leave for the United States.

But before they could pack their bags, these top pugs from Mindanao will have to travel to Cebu, check in at the RWS gym and train with Pacquiao.

"I want to show them how hard I train," Pacquiao said.

As could be expected, Gonzales and Maraon, trained by Noli Piñol, will be under the supervision of Roach, two-time Trainer of the Year.

Who knows? Maybe all Piñol had wanted was for a few of his boxers to be able to train at the Cebu gym under the guidance of Roach while Pacquiao is still working out in the country.

* * *

You see, part of the original plan was for at least three Braveheart fighters to train in a noted Chicago gym because, as Piñol maintained, Wild Card was already too crowded and Roach had enough boxers than he could effectively handle.

Hiso, who has been helping in the upkeep of the Braveheart fighters from his Chicago end—sending vitamins, fighting uniforms and equipment, while helping Piñol promote fights—was to provide board and lodging for the fighters in their US training.

However, that Chicago part of the initial plan had to be shelved following the knockout defeat of Rodel Mayol in his world junior flyweight title bid on Aug. 4.

Reason: Mayol, who looked malnourished and overtrained, was handled by the same trainer who was supposed to teach and shape up the first wave of Braveheart fighters from Mindanao.

Anyway, it's very likely Pacquiao was repaying Piñol a debt of gratitude in instantly accommodating Gonzales (6 wins, 1 draw, 4 KOs) and bantamweight Maraon (11 wins, 1 draw, 9 KOs) in the October Vegas blockbuster.

Piñol had to gamble with the shirt on his back in order to promote Pacquiao, at least twice in Kidapawan and once in Davao, when the boxing superstar was trying to pick up the pieces of his career following his tragic 1999 dethronement as WBC flyweight king in Thailand.

Big games propel Paeng, Jojo to top

BOWLING LEGEND PAENG NEpomuceno and veteran internationalist Jojo Cañare rolled big games to easily make the quarterfinals of the 2007 QubicaAMF World Cup national finals Sunday and Monday at Paeng's Midtown Bowl in Ermita.

Nepomuceno burned the lanes for 2947 pinfalls in his second 12-game set to collect a 24-game total of 5614, opening a commanding 186-pin lead over second-running Benny Dytoc (5428) and boost his bid for another shot at the World Cup which he has so far won an unprecedented four times.

Nepomuceno waxed hot in the last 10 games after starting second day of action with 199 and 204. He began knocking down the pins with authority after that, shooting 227 in the third and following this with 244, 232, 259, 227, 267, 245, 276 and 242.

Cañare, who is seeking back-to-back national WC titles, highlighted her second 10-game outing with 278 and 279 sizzlers to finish with 4332, and an 181-pin edge over Liza del Rosario (4151) going into the ladies' quarterfinals.

Also making it to the top eight were Jaymee Bautista with 3813; Ellen Ramos (3777); Kat Cruz (3777); Alice Cabazor (3709), Nida Lagrisola (3694), and Lovella Catalan (3687).

Reigning world FIQ titlist Biboy Rivera was in third spot in the men's division, 261 off Nepomuceno with 5353, while last year's champion Markwin Tee ranked fifth at 5290.

The other remaining contenders from an original field of 84 are Julius Sy, fourth at 5342, Vener Reasonda, sixth (5253); Paulo Valdez, seventh (5250); and Benshir Layoso, eight, 5177.

The unpredictable—and last—phase of the competition begins at noon today at SM Mall of Asia Center, where the quarterfinalists figure in the best-of-three, head-to-head knockout matches.

UCAA board member Tisha Abundo (second from left) talks about the league's sixth season which starts this Saturday as (from left) Ucaa director Cesar Monteclaro, PBA chair Tony Chua of Red Bull and and PBA OIC Sonny Barrios look on. INQUIRER PHOTO/ RYAN LIM

Generals seek No. 4 sans star

THE EMILIO AGUINALDO COLLEGE GENerals gun for a fourth straight Universities and Colleges Athletic Association basketball title starting Saturday sans top star Ronjay Buenafe, a second-round draft pick in the PBA.

Coach Nomar Isla, appearing in yesterday' s weekly PSA Forum sponsored by Shakey's UN Avenue and Pagcor, said Buenafe is a big loss but maintains the Generals still have a reliable unit, bannered by veterans Bong Melocoton and Nico Hubalde.

"*Mahirap* (It's hard), but we'll be fine," said Isla. "We're still optimistic about our campaign."

The tournament, which opens its sixth edition on Saturday at The Arena in San Juan, will also have in the fold Asian College of Science and Technology, Olivarez College, St. Francis of Assisi, La Salle-Dasmariñas, Philippine School of Business Administration and rookie teams University College of Nursing and Las Piñas College.

Ucaa executive Tisha Abundo of PSBA expects the title race to be wide open.

SPORTSWATCH

Nadera tops Pichay chess, takes home P100,000

INTERNATIONAL MASTER BARLO Nadera bested National Master Ernesto Fernandez in the ninth and final round to top the recent 4th Prospero Pichay Sr. Memorial Open Chess Tournament at the Surigao del Sur Institue of Technology in Cantilan.

Nadera finished unbeaten and garnered 8.5 points in nine outings. He drew with IM Oliver Dimakiling in the seventh round.

Nadera pocketed P100,000 in the event held annually to honor the late father of National Chess Federation of the Philippines president Prospero Pichay Jr.

Tied for second to fourth places with 7 points apiece were IM Richard Bitoon, NM Mirabeau Maga and NM Emmanuel Senador. Each received P23,333.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

FBL hoops lures 59 teams

FIFTY-NINE TEAMS FROM 40 SCHOOLS IN Metro Manila and nearby provinces will compete in the third season of the Futures Basketball League (FBL) starting Sept. 16 at the Xavier School gym in San Juan.

The league, which has now expanded into four divisions, will have both Ateneo and San Beda College-Alabang going for "threepeats" in their respective divisions.

Ateneo will be defending its 8-10 boys' mini title while SBC-Alabang will try to keep its title in the 11-13 midgets division.

The other two divisions of the league, presented by Primovit Multivitamins and Gatorade Thirst Quenchers and major sponsors Purefoods TJ Hotdogs and Accord Capital, are the 14-under and the 16-under divisions for both boys and girls.

3 former world champions banner stellar APPT field

THREE FORMER CHAMPIONS OF THE World Series of Poker, the world's biggest and most prestigious poker tournament, banner a star-studded field taking part in the inaugural leg of the Asia Pacific Poker Tour (APPT) slated Aug. 24-26 at the Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila on Pedro Gil Street.

World Poker Tour champ Daniel Negreanu (2004) and Joe Hachem (World Series winner in 2005), both representing Team PokerStars, loom as heavy favorites in the opening event of Asia's richest poker tournament produced by PokerStars.com and sanctioned by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor).

Another top-caliber foreign entry in the event which offers P25 million in prize money is Welsh pro Mansour Matloubi, the first non-American to win the World Series.

Leading the Filipino challengers is Neil Arce, who cashed in more than $50,000 in the World Series in Las Vegas last April.

Meanwhile, the APPT Manila Cup reels off at 6 p.m. today, also at the Hyatt Hotel.

For inquiries, call 09157532880 or visit www.appt.com.ph.

Pasay derby screening today

THE SCREENING OF ENTRIES FOR THE "Battle of Big Boys" 7-stag derby will be held today until Sunday at Pasay City Cockpit.

Pit manager Eric dela Rosa said that only stags banded by NFGB, UGBA, NGBA, GF-Ban, LGBA, Pagba, CVBA, SGBA and Migba will be accepted for screening.

Slated on Aug. 31, th derby is supported by Sagupaan Complexor 3000.

"Win or lose, each participant must field all seven stags in one day," said dela Rosa.

Big fights slated at Makati

STAGFIGHT ACTION BLASTS OFF AT THE Makati Coliseum on Aug. 27 and 29 via the annual Richard L. Bates 7-Stag Derby, featuring more than 70 gamecock breeders from all over the country.

The event, which offers a guaranteed prize of P700,000, opens with the 3-stag elimination on Monday with the 4-stag championship round set on Wednesday.

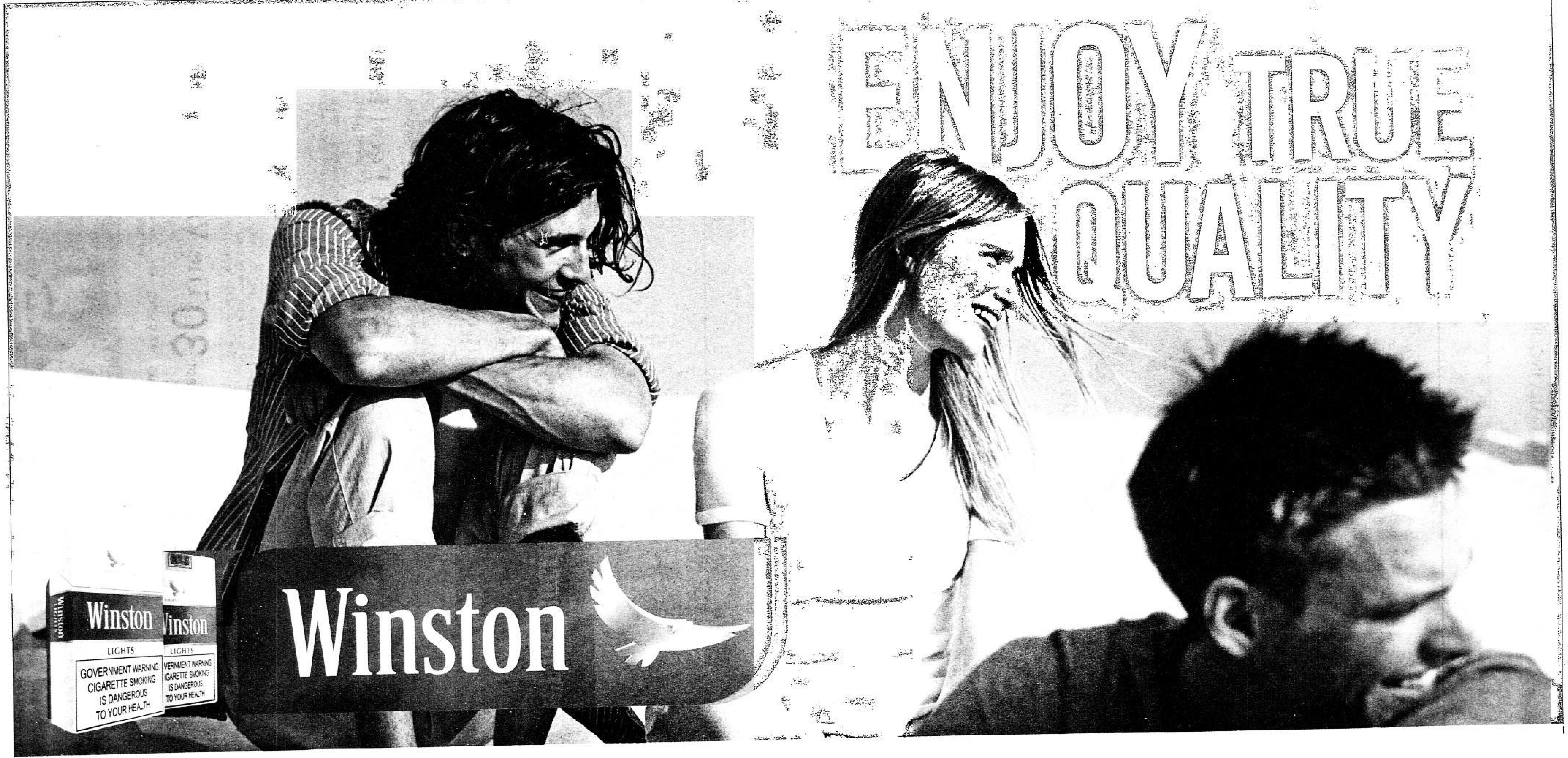
The Super Pacman 5-stag derby comes next on Sept. 3, followed by the PCAP 5-stag derby on Sept. 5.

'Stagwars' kick off Friday

THE "STAGWARS" 5-STAG DERBY, A gathering of about 300 gamecock breeders, starts on Friday at the 7,000-seat Cainta Fair Center Coliseum, the biggest cockpit in Rizal province.

To be hosted by 2005 World Slasher Cup champion Boy Marzo, Ronnie Lacsina and Bubut Gavino, the seven-day battle on Aug. 24, 27, 29, 31, Sept. 3, 5 and 7 dangles a guaranteed prize of P1.5 million.

Entry fee is P4,400.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$5-million bond for cagers' robbers

BRIDGEVIEW, ILLINOIS—BOND WAS SET AT $5 MILLION EACH FOR two men accused of tying up and robbing New York Knicks' Eddy Curry at his Chicago mansion. Demorris Hill and Antoine Larkins are also charged in the armed robbery of Miami Heat's Antoine Walker. *AP*

Blind woman golfer sinks ace

LEHIGHTON, PENNSYLVANIA—SHEILA DRUMMOND DIDN'T NEED TO see her hole-in-one. She heard it. Drummond, blinded by diabetes 26 years ago, aced the 144-yard, par-3 fourth hole at Mahoning Valley Country Club on Sunday while playing with her husband and two friends. *AP*

NBA stars shoot for Beijing spot

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—US NATIONAL Basketball Association stars will try to qualify for the 2008 Beijing Olympics starting here Wednesday at the 10-team FIBA Americas regional qualifier to decide two berths for China.

The host Americans will be overwhelming favorites to reach the final and seal a spot in Beijing against Caribbean and North and South American rivals—including defending Olympic champion Argentina.

"There's a lot of work to be done. It's a long road ahead," US guard and NBA scoring champion Kobe Bryant said. "There are a lot of competitive teams out there and they are going to be ready to play.

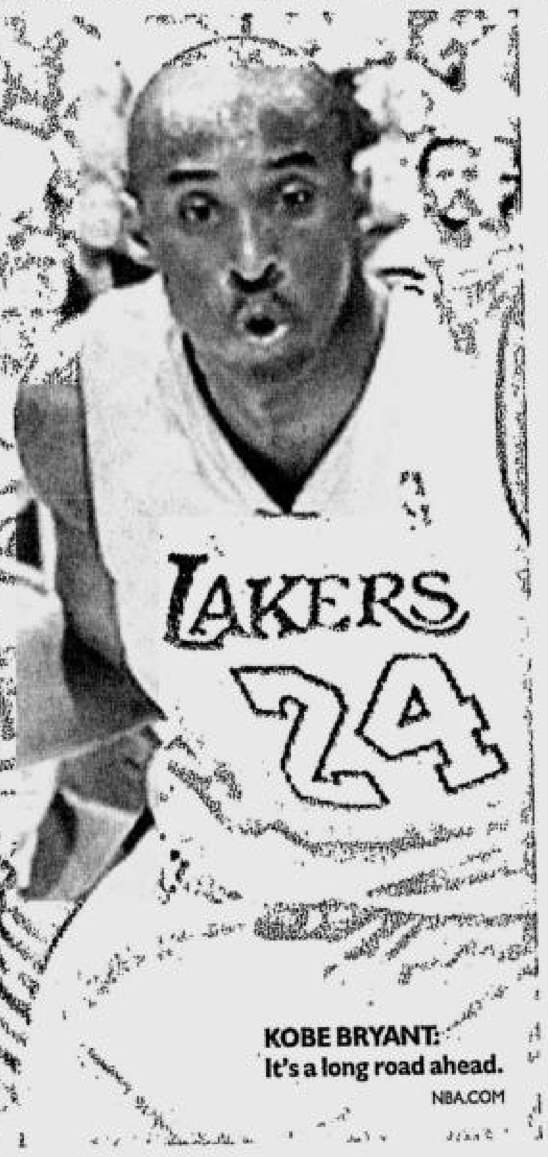
"We have to work hard and try to get ourselves in the best possible condition to win the games. We have to be ready. We will be ready."

The US men have been humbled in recent events, settling for sixth at the 2002 world championships, third at the 2004 Athens Olympics and third in Japan at last year's worlds, where champion Spain secured a berth for Beijing.

All teams face a gauntlet of eight round-robin games over nine days to determine four semifinalists who play Sept. 1 to determine which clubs qualify for Beijing. The US squad opens Wednesday against Venezuela.

Also in Group B for the Americans in the first round are Brazil, Canada and the US Virgin Islands. Group A round-robin teams are Argentina, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Panama and Uruguay.

The US roster includes Bryant, LeBron James, Jason Kidd, Carmelo Anthony, Deron Williams, Amare Stoudemire, rookie Kevin Durant, Chauncey Billups, Tayshaun Prince, Tyson Chandler, Dwight Howard, Nick Collison, Mike Miller, J.J. Redick and Michael Redd. *AFP*



KOBE BRYANT: It's a long road ahead.
NBA.COM

Federer gets top seeding with Henin

NEW YORK—WORLD NUMBER ONES Roger Federer and Justine Henin were named by the US Tennis Association as top seeds for the US Open here on Monday, one week before the start of the year's last Grand Slam tournament.

Federer, who will seek his 12th Slam title and Open-era record fourth US Open crown in a row, is chasing the all-time Slam singles record of 14 titles held by Pete Sampras, who won the last of his Slams here in 2002.

Reigning US and Australian Open and Wimbledon champion Federer will find out his first opponent in Wednesday's draw. This marks the fourth year in a row that the Swiss star will be the men's top seed at the US Open.

Spain's Rafael Nadal, who beat Federer in the Roland Garros final and made an epic fight before falling in the Wimbledon final, will be the second seed followed in ranking order by Serbia's Novak Djokovic, Russian Nikolay Davydenko and US veterans Andy Roddick and James Blake.

Henin is followed by Russian second seed and defending champion Maria Sharapova and Serbian third seed Jelena Jankovic. *AFP*

Rudas siblings head to finals

SIBLINGS MARINEL AND JOHN REY Rudas topped their respective groups in the North Luzon finals of the Milo Junior Tennis Cup elimination at the Dapitan Tennis Club in Manila yesterday to earn slots to the national finals which will stake trips to the Malaysia junior tennis circuit.

Marinel posted a 1-6, 7-5, 10-4 win over club entry Macy Gonzales in the girls' 14-under while younger brother John Rey turned back Lexter Quitara of Cavite, 1-6, 6-4, 10-4, in the boys' 12-under.

Also getting berths to the national finals set Oct. 6-7 in Manila are Antique's Marian Capadocia Jeson Patrombon of San Beda-Taytay and Niel Puche of Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Watanabe, Buncio overall champions

FIL-JAPANESE DASHI Watanabe of Kawasaki and Maico Buncio of Yamaha faltered in the final leg but piled up enough points to capture the overall titles in their respective divisions in the recent 2007 San Mig Coffee Philippine Underbone King Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

The 13-year-old Watanabe wound up third behind Anthony Roman and Danny Daquigan, enough to claim the overall 110cc Petron Super Stock plum.

Buncio, despite finishing only seventh and second, earned 36 points for the day to clinch the overall 125 Sports Production crown with 176 points.

Rainier Resuello clocked 17:07.241 to bag top honors in the final leg of the 125 Sports Production, a part of the 2007 Shell Helix Grand Prix sanctioned by the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa).

The win was Resuello first in said division.

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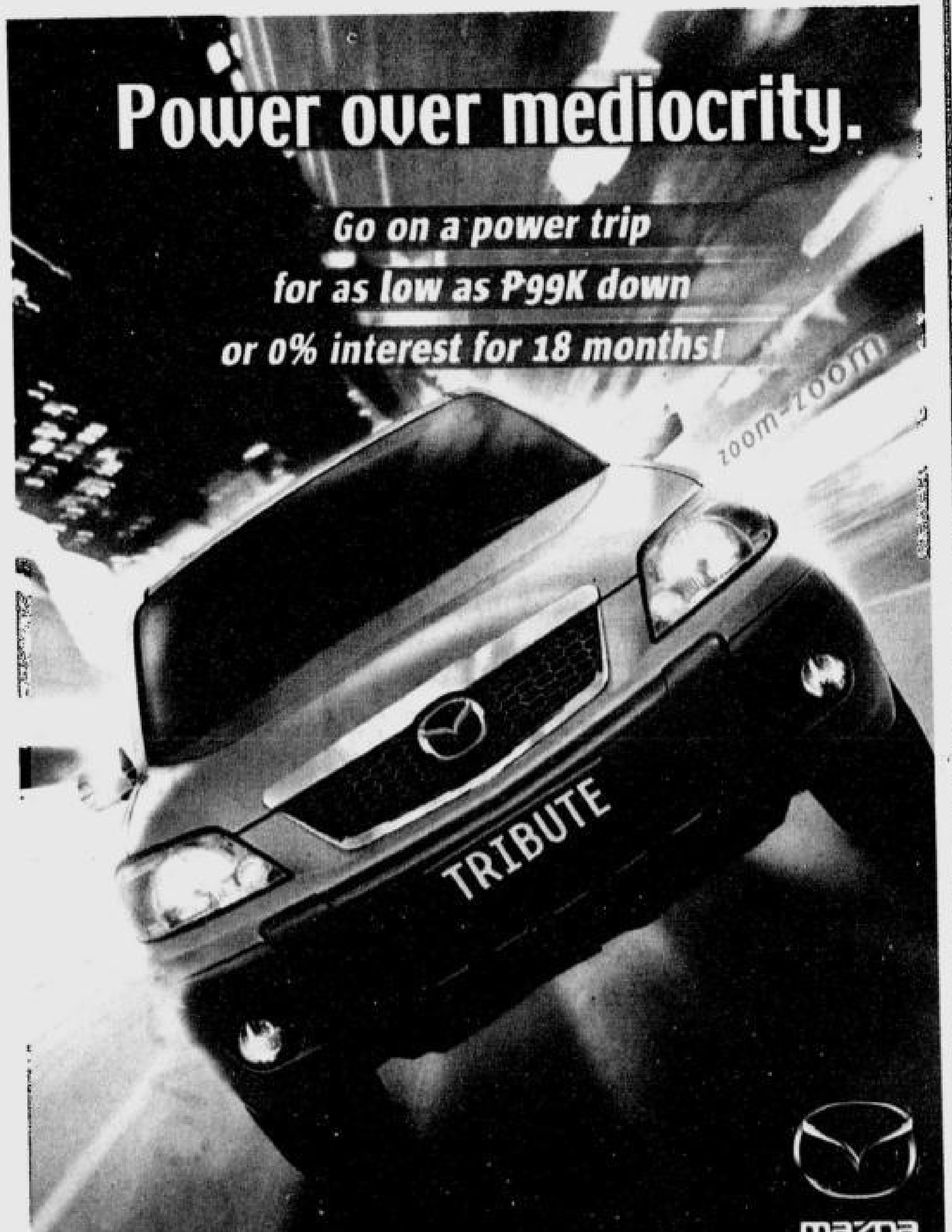

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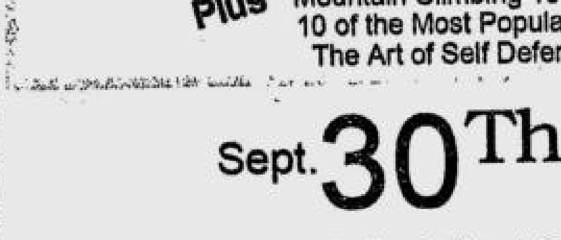

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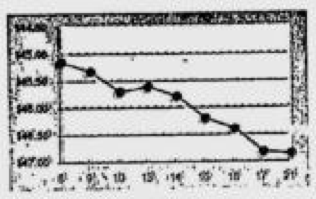
Peso weakens to 46.90 to a dollar

Analysts say stock rebound can abate currency's decline

INDICATORS



CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱46.90 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 21, 2007

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO INITIALLY REBOUNDED AGAINST the dollar yesterday following the fresh interest rate cut by the US Federal Reserve, but the local currency failed to sustain the early lead due to unabated selldown pressures from offshore investors.

As the local financial markets resumed trading after a long weekend, the peso opened strongly against the dollar at 46.55 but closed weaker at the day's low of 46.90 on continuing risk aversion by foreign investors, currency traders said.

At the end of the day, the local currency shed another 5 centavos from Friday's finish of 46.85 to a dollar. Trading volume at the Philippine Dealing System was thin at $381.66 million compared to Friday's $538.75 million.

Although the US Fed's half-a-percentage cut in its discount rate—or the rate at which it lends to banks—boosted global stock markets, currency traders said selldown orders that accumulated since last week before the markets paused for a long weekend weighed down on yesterday's trading.

They also said that there was still strong pressure from offshore investors to unload regional currencies in line with the growing aversion to emerging market assets.

Some currency traders said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas was unloading dollars at yesterday's intra-day low of 46.90 against the greenback.

"So it looks like this barrier is holding, but if it doesn't, the next target will be 47.30 and then 48.30," a currency trader said.

But other traders said the rebound of the stock market yesterday should bode well for the peso in the days ahead.

"Risk aversion kept the peso weaker. However, equity recovery could see some improvement to the 46.60-46.75 levels," said Banco de Oro chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. senior vice president Marcelo Ayes said prospective cuts in the US Fed funds rate, the more significant interest rate benchmark in the United States, by September or even earlier should provide a silver lining to the battered financial markets.

The US Fed funds rate covers the rate at which banks in the world's biggest economy lend to one another.

Ayes said the it was becoming more difficult to trade in the financial markets these days because of the extreme volatility.

"It's because the market as a whole is illiquid. More than half of investors from North America are on holiday and we've entered the so-called ghost month in Asia," Ayes said.

Gov't stake in Meralco to be sold this year

By Abigail L. Ho

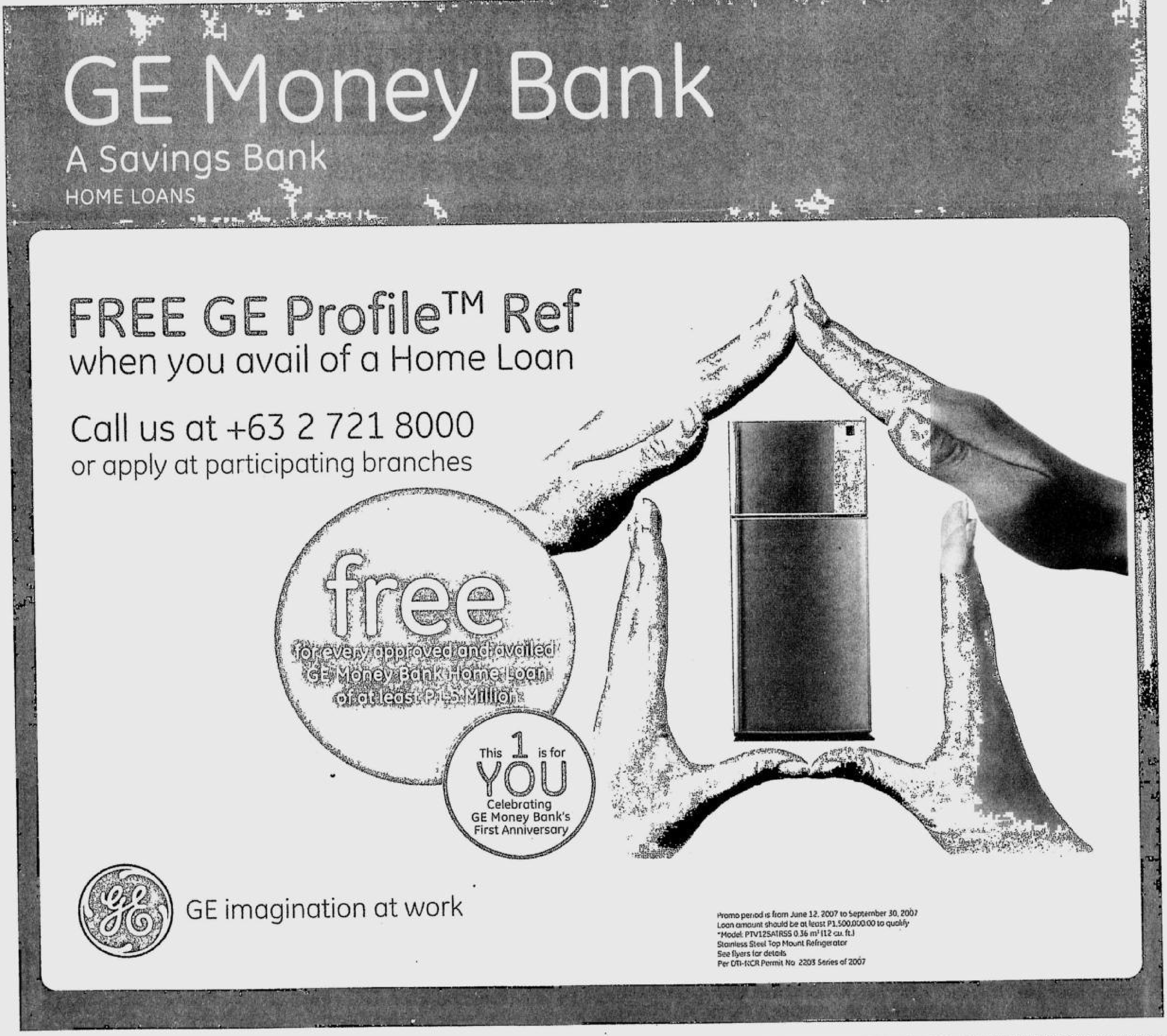
DESPITE HAVING ONLY FOUR months left in the year, the Department of Finance is sticking to its target of selling the government's 29-percent stake in Manila Electric Co. within that period.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said the planned sale was still under study, but this could be done either within this quarter or the next.

Right now, he said there were a number of strategic investors interested in acquiring the Meralco shares, but their identities could not be disclosed yet.

The Lopez family, which cur-

GOV'T/B2



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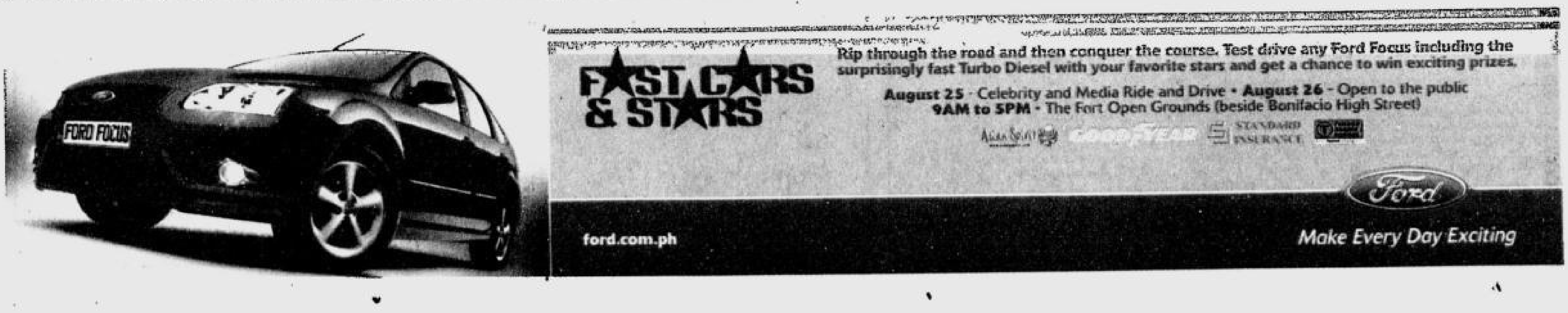

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PLDT plan to expand coverage bucked

By Riza T. Olchondra

RIVAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS companies have opposed the plan of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to further expand its network.

Globe subsidiary Innove and Philippine Global Communications Inc. said in filings before the National Telecommunications Co. that there were already enough operators in the provinces, and that PLDT's expansion could lead to "ruinous competition."

Earlier this year, PLDT obtained a provisional authority to operate in regions 2 and 4, as well as regions 5 to 12, ARMM and Caraga in addition to its existing operations in Metro Manila. PLDT said it has not completely served these regions and wanted to operate in "certain areas not yet covered" by its authorization.

"The approval of the application may inevitably result in unregulated competition and prevent the existing authorized carriers from justifiably recovering the considerable investment that they have infused into their operations," Philcom said in a filing.

Globe Telecom Inc. wireline unit Innove, Bayan Telecommunications Inc. (Bayan) earlier gave the same reasons for opposing PLDT's application.

"The entry of PLDT will only bring about ruinous competition," Innove said.

"The operation of the proposed service would constitute needless, wasteful and uneconomic duplication of existing telecommunications services provided by Bayan, resulting in a waste of valuable resources," Bayan added.

Gov't stake ...

From page B1

rently controls Meralco, has expressed interest in acquiring the government's stake in the distribution utility.

In an earlier interview, Meralco chair and chief executive Manuel Lopez said his family was now in talks with potential partners to raise some $500 million to bid for the government's 29-percent stake in Meralco.

He added that the Lopez clan, together with its partners, would submit a bid, whether for the entire government stake, or for stakes to be sold separately by government entities holding a stake in Meralco.

The national government, Land Bank of the Philippines, and pension funds Social Security System and Government Service Insurance System together hold the 29-percent stake in Meralco.

The Privatization Management Office has another 12-percent interest in the power utility.

Teves said the DOE was sticking to its original plan of selling the entire 29-percent stake as a whole, instead of breaking this up.

"Originally, we're thinking of selling it as a block for strategic investors. That's still our preference. Selling it as a block will be more lucrative as it will give the shares a sort of premium, similar to what happened with PNOC (Energy Development Corp.)," he told reporters.

Banks charge too much for overseas money transfers - part 2

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

ROBERTO NEPOMUCENO, after reading last week's column in the INQUIRER website, e-mailed a letter from San Diego, California.

He said that the transmission center, aside from charging a high fee, takes its greedy cut right at the source. For example, if the exchange rate in Manila is P46.40 to $1, the center will only credit the sender P46 for every dollar sent.

I wrote back that this happens when the money is being sent to the recipient's peso bank account in Manila, or if the carrier, such as Luzon Brokerage, is to deliver the pesos to the recipient personally.

But, if the money is to be sent directly to the recipient's dollar account in Manila, then the recipient will have to be actually credited with dollars.

In which case, the bank in Manila, after charging the recipient 2+ percent in fees, will hold on to the dollars for as long as it can, sometimes as long as 45 days, especially if the peso is expected to get stronger, so that the final peso outlay will be less.

No matter how you look at it, the banks take their greedy cut coming or going.

The Overseas Filipino Worker in the Middle East faces a similar problem as Mr. Nepomuceno.

Since the OFW has to send money home every month, he grapples with the problem of high transmission fees in a different way.

The smuggling boss or the jueteng lord in Manila has a roomful of P1,000 bills he can deposit in a bank only at the risk of running afoul of BSP's antimoney laundering rules.

Since he cannot explain to the bank where he got all that money, he launders the cash by appointing an agent in the Middle East to buy OFW dollars. Because of the high transmission charges, it is easy to outbid the banks.

The OFW is offered an attractive rate. He sells his dollars to the agent, and sends a text message to his wife to pick up the corresponding pesos at the smuggler's place.

The only good thing I find in this is: The transaction is entirely on the honor system. Money changes hands without any invoices or receipts. Everyone is taken at his word.

The Bangko Sentral's antimoney laundering council will find it extremely difficult to stop this money laundering scheme. Besides, where will you find the government functionary who will have the heart to chase the OFW's lonely housewife?

After all, she is merely keeping the family together, paying the installments on the house and sending the children to school while her husband is away.

The best way to stop this money laundering is for the banks to compete with the *jueteng* lords by charging reasonable transmission fees. Then, the OFW does not have to sell his dollars to some dirty agent and send his wife sneaking into the *jueteng* lord's back door.

Maybe Senator Angara's committee on banks should look into these remittance problems of Filipinos abroad, who are supposed to be the new heroes of the land. The banks are not treating our Filipinos abroad as heroes. Instead, they are treated as patsies.

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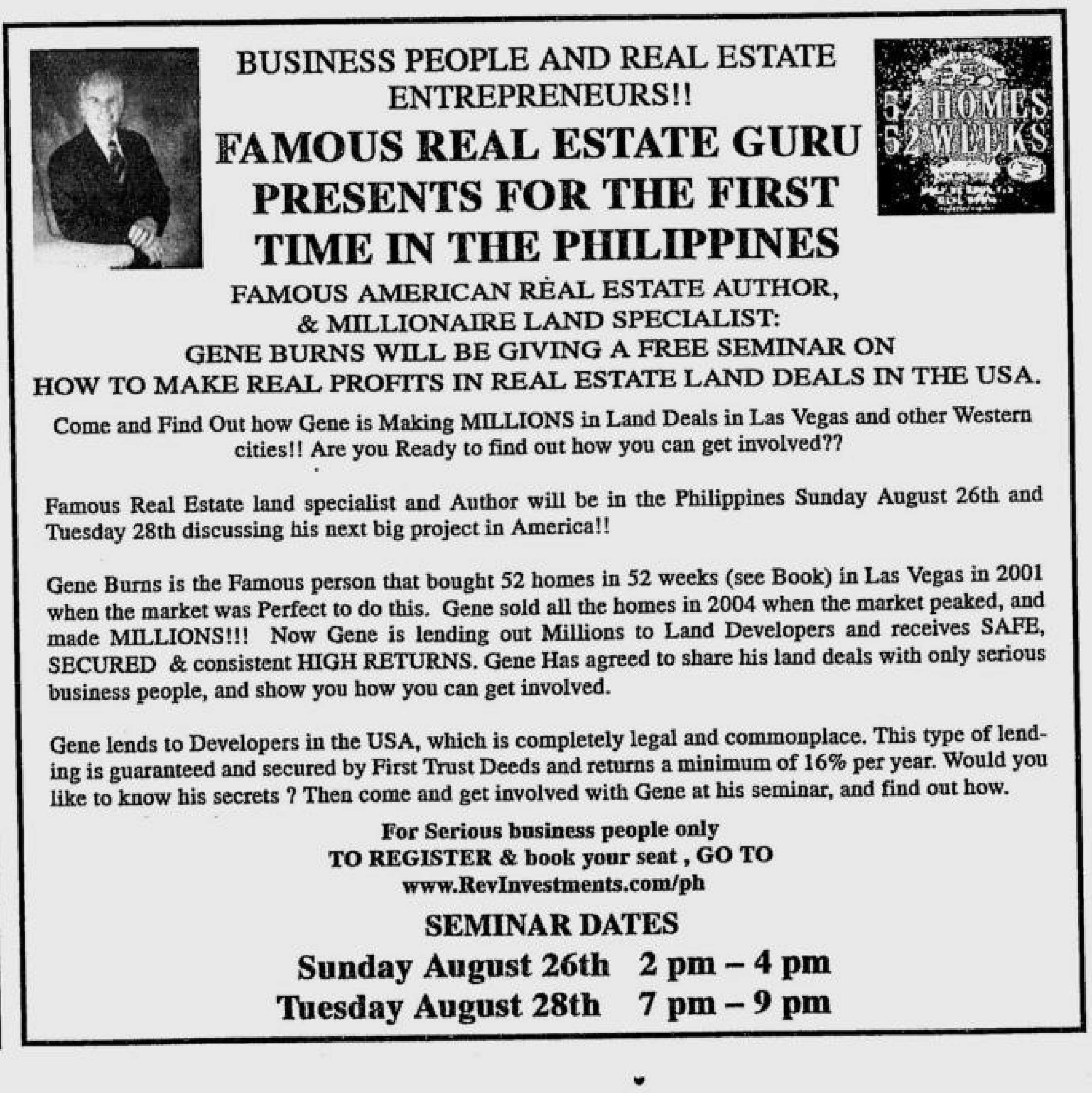
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10-yr T-bond rate inches up to 7.75%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE YIELD ON THE 10-YEAR TREASURY bonds inched up yesterday despite the government's improved fiscal performance in July, as nervousness over the US subprime sector spilled over to the domestic bond market.

The new rate for the long-term bonds hit 7.75 percent, up 48.2 basis points from the 7.268 percent recorded during the last auction for the 10-year government securities in June.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted only P3.63 billion worth of bids, falling short of its plan to raise about P7 billion.

Tenders reached P10.93 billion.

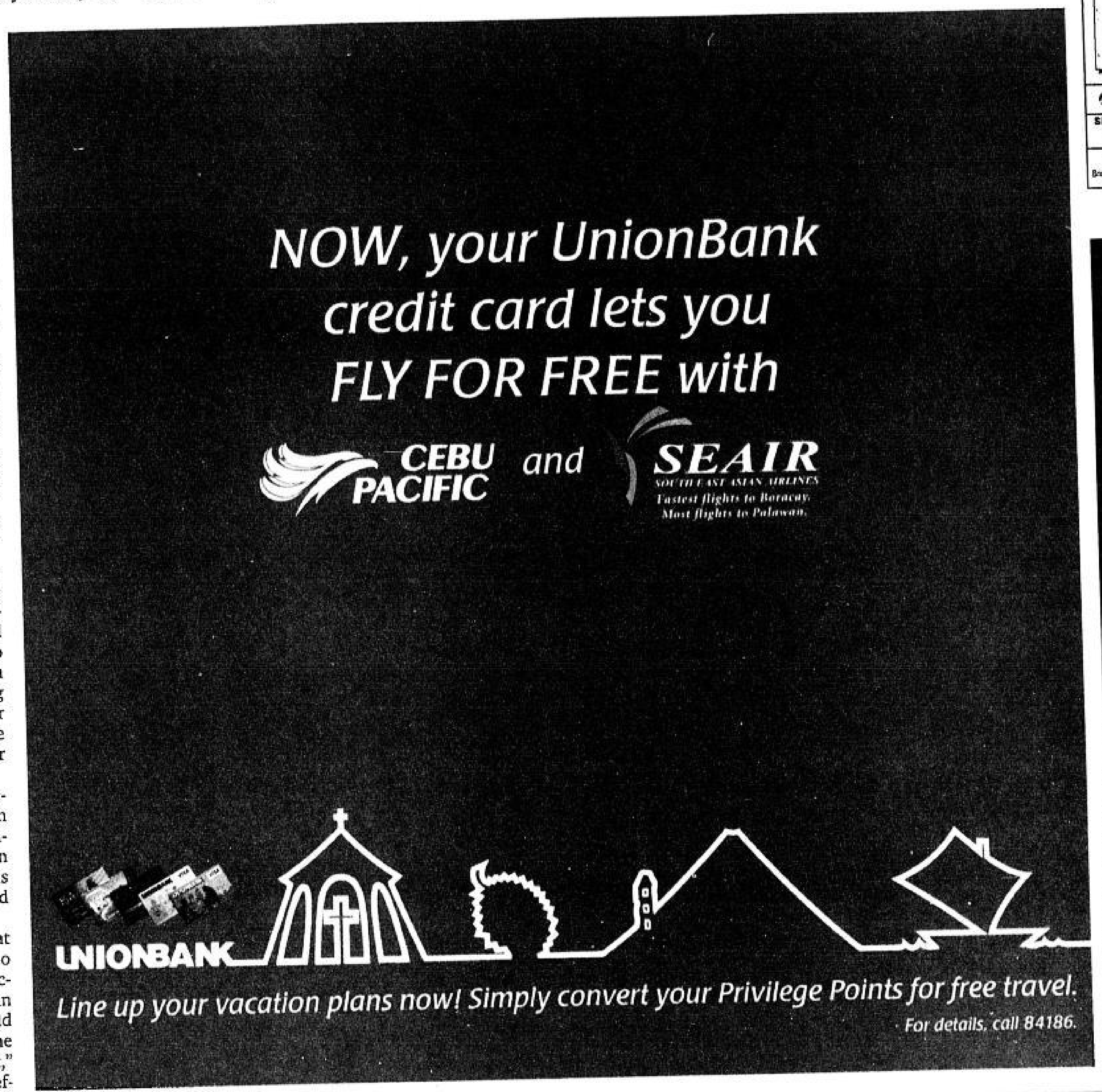
Finance Undersecretary Roberto Tan, who is also acting national treasurer, said the BTr decided to accept only a portion of the debt offering to prevent a further increase in the rate for the 10-year bonds.

Had the BTr accepted the P7 billion worth of bids as intended, the yield on the 10-year bonds could have reached 8 percent, he said.

"We thought that 8 percent was too high, and so we accepted only an amount that would align the rate at the secondary market," Tan said in a briefing after the auction yesterday.

The finance official said though that there was not too much activity in the secondary market due to concerns over the US subprime market. The subprime market covers loans extended to borrowers with a spotty credit history.

Fears of defaults in the US caused stock markets to dive last week, but many have started to recover after the US Federal Reserve cut its discount rate.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DOF: Gov't borrowed 15% less in 1st 7 months

Appreciating peso, decline in interest rates led to reduced borrowing

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT borrowed P289.97 billion in the first seven months of the year to help plug its budget deficit and pay off maturing liabilities, data from the Department of Finance showed.

The borrowings for January to July recorded a 15-percent drop from the P341.49 billion posted in the same period a year ago.

Finance officials said the drop in borrowings was attributed to the expected decline in the budget deficit and improvement in macroeconomic conditions, such as lower interest rates and stronger peso.

A drop in interest rates means that the government will be spending less to pay for interest on its loans. Appreciation of the peso tends to trim the government's foreign-currency denominated debts in local currency terms.

Borrowings as of July already represented 76 percent of the P380.951 billion that the government programmed to borrow for the entire year to meet all its expenditure requirements that cannot be accommodated due to insufficient revenue.

Data showed that, of the total borrowings, P103.706 billion were sourced from foreign lenders. Foreign-currency denominated borrowings come either in the form of official development assistance (ODA) or commercial loans obtained through flotation of sovereign bonds in the international capital market.

The country's biggest sources of ODA are the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank.

The amount of foreign borrowings recorded as of July include the $1 billion obtained from the sale of global bonds in the international capital market in January.

The higher share of P186.267 billion was composed of borrowings from the domestic capital market, particularly through the sale of Treasury bills and bonds.

The government has adopted the policy of borrowing more from domestic sources, in order to minimize the effects of a possible depreciation of the peso, which can lead to bloated foreign-currency denominated debts.

Finance Undersecretary Robert Tan said the government is committed to trim down its budget deficit according to what has been programmed under the Arroyo administration's fiscal agenda until 2010.

Under the program, the government should reduce its deficit to P63 billion this year from last year's P64.8 billion and balance its budget by 2008.

"It is only after we balance the budget that we can reduce our outstanding debt, and therefore lessen our need for borrowings," he had said.

While appreciation of the peso somehow eases the amount of foreign-currency denominated debts, a marked reduction in the government's outstanding liabilities would only show once it posts a budget surplus, he added.

Latest figure from the DOF showed that the government's outstanding debt is at P3.819 trillion as of May this year.

Jobs, opportunities hinge on ratification of JPEPA

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AN INITIAL BATCH OF 500 nurses and caregivers may be deployed to Japan as soon as the Senate ratifies the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement.

But that opportunity could be lost if Jakarta were to secure its own EPA with Tokyo, according to Cabinet officials.

Officials from the departments of trade, foreign affairs and labor and employment said that the JPEPA translates to opportunities, especially now that Tokyo is opening its service sector to foreigners for the first time in history.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino yesterday hosted a joint press conference to apprise the media of the Legislative-Excutive Development Advisory Council's position on the JPEPA.

"JPEPA is a means to empower our people to take advantage of opportunities," Aquino said. "Without JPEPA, the Philippines would not enjoy greater market access that its neighbors in Southeast Asia would be enjoying through their own EPAs."

Aquino, who had been the country's chief negotiator during the JPEPA talks, noted that Japan has wrapped up similar agreements with Brunei, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand, and is in the process of negotiations with other Southeast Asian countries.

He said that, without the JPEPA, Philippine exports to Japan would not enjoy preferential tariffs unlike those from Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Indonesia and even Vietnam. Also, Filipino professionals would not have access to jobs in Japan unlike those from the same countries.

Domingo L. Siazon Jr., Philippine ambassador to Japan, said the Japanese government was ready to spend for the training—mainly in Nihongo—of 600 caregivers and 400 nurses in preparation for work there.

"Under JPEPA, Japan would shoulder expenses for six months of training, including board and lodging and a monthly stipend of $400 or 47,000 yen," Siazon said. "If there is no JPEPA, our nurses and caregivers can't go. The opportunities would go to the Indonesians because the same concession are provided in their own EPA."

Siazon also said a positive action from the Senate was best arrived at before the end of the year to give time for Tokyo to allot funds for the training.

According to the Ledac, JPEPA would result in increased economic growth for the Philippines, ranging from 1.7 percent to 3.3 percent of overall output.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Finance
Securities and Exchange Commission
SEC Bldg EDSA, Greenhills, Mandaluyong City

CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

SEC-CFD ORDER No. 114
Series of 2007

IN THE MATTER OF THE
OPTIMA BALANCE FUND, INC.
-Registrant-
x------------------------------x

ORDER

Upon consideration of the Registration Statement and application to act as an investment company together with the other papers and documents attached thereto filed for and on behalf of OPTIMA BALANCE FUND, INC., the Commission, in its meeting of June 20, 2007, resolved to approve the application of said corporation to act as an investment company under the Investment Company Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, and to render effective its Registration Statement covering its Two Hundred Million (200,000,000) common shares in accordance with the Securities Regulation Code and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

A Certificate of Permit to Offer Securities for Sale authorizing the sale of said securities is issued with this Order.

Let a copy of this ORDER be published at the expense of the corporation once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines within ten (10) days from the date of this ORDER. The subject company is hereby directed to furnish the Commission with a copy of the affidavit of publication of this ORDER.

SO ORDERED.

28 June 2007, EDSA, Greenhills, City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines.

(Sgd.) JUSTINA P. CALLANGAN
Director

(PDI - Aug. 22 & 28, 2007)

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Philex eyes Diwalwal gold mines

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST FILIPINO-owned mining firm has expressed its interest in setting up operations in the gold-rich Mount Diwalwal Mining Reservation—a move which could help the government harness the potential of the controversial area.

In an interview with the INQUIRER, Philex Mining Corp. chair and CEO Walter W. Brown said that he had recently made his intentions known to government authorities in charge of developing what is touted as the Philippines' richest gold mine.

"We are going for Diwalwal," he said. "We've already talked to the government, and we want a position in it."

Mount Diwalwal in Compostela Valley is estimated to hold as much as $18 billion in gold reserves, according to the latest government estimate.

The area is a hotbed of unrest, however, with small miners, indigenous people, the local government, the military and rebel units fighting for control of the lucrative gold panning operations.

According to Brown, Philex is uniquely positioned to develop the area, and succeed where other mining firms have failed.

"We are familiar with all the factors involved," he said. "We have been in the business for many years. We have the local network and we know the LGUs (local government units) and the indigenous people."

"No foreign company has the experience that we have," Brown replied when asked about the foreign mining firms also interested in Mount Diwalwal.

He added that Philex also has the technical know-how equal to that of foreign miners, on top of being cash-rich due to the high prices of metals in recent years on the world market.

If the deal is sealed, Brown said, the Diwalwal project will add to Philex's earnings potential, on top of its new gold exploration site in Boyongan, Surigao del Norte.

Important Facts about NCLEX Testing in Manila

- **When will NCLEX testing begin in Manila?**

NCLEX testing in Manila will commence in August 23, 2007. Scheduling for examination appointments began on July 13, 2007.

- **How do I register to take the NCLEX?**

Procedures for registering to take the NCLEX in Manila may be done by mail, telephone or via the internet through Pearson VUE. More information may be obtained from the website of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing and Pearson VUE at www.ncsbn.org and www.pearsonvue.com, respectively.

- **Where and how often will NCLEX testing be held?**

NCLEX testing will be held from Mondays to Saturdays at the Pearson Professional Center located in Trident Tower, 312 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. The procedures for registration in other international test centers apply to the Manila test center as well.

- **Who will administer the NCLEX in Manila?**

Just like in other international test centers for NCLEX, Pearson VUE will conduct the NCLEX for the NCSBN. All aspects of exam delivery and administration shall be handled exclusively by Pearson VUE.

- **What is the role of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) and the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX (PTF-NCLEX) in NCLEX testing?**

The role of CFO and the PTF-NCLEX is to ensure that all NCSBN concerns regarding examination security and protection of intellectual property rights are addressed effectively and in a timely manner. We therefore urge the public, especially the nurses who intend to take their NCLEX at the Manila test center to cooperate with the CFO in ensuring that the Philippines remains to be a safe and secure site for the conduct of the NCLEX.

- **Does the CFO or PTF-NCLEX endorse review centers for the NCLEX?**

The CFO or the PTF-NCLEX does not and will not endorse review centers for the NCLEX examination. We believe that there are more effective means for nurses to prepare for the NCLEX examination. For example, nurses may download NCLEX test plans from the NCSBN website, free of charge. NCLEX test plans provide a concise summary of the content and scope of the NCLEX examination, a useful guide for nurses intending to take the examination.

- **Are we assured of a permanent NCLEX test center in Manila?**

No. NCSBN periodically assesses its international testing sites and decides whether or not they should continue to operate. In April 16 this year, a Korean publication reported that the NCSBN suspended testing in Seoul upon findings that a local nursing school was caught giving lectures based on questions from previous NCLEX examinations. It is therefore essential for the public to understand that the continued operation of NCLEX testing in Manila rests heavily in our ability to check illegal activity that may endanger examination security.

5 DON'TS for a safe and secure NCLEX testing center in Manila

1. Don't patronize pirated NCLEX materials.
2. Don't illegally reproduce NCLEX materials.
3. Don't patronize materials from individuals or entities claiming to have access to past NCLEX questionnaires.
4. Don't reconstruct NCLEX test questionnaires.
5. Don't entertain offers from individuals or entities who offer money in exchange of memorizing NCLEX test questionnaires.

The activities above are illegal and may result to legal, administrative and professional sanctions against violators.

If you are aware of individuals or entities conducting the abovementioned activities, please contact the Presidential Task Force on NCLEX at:

Tel. no. (632) 561-8160 / 561-8321 loc. 601
Fax no. (632) 561-8332
E-mail: info@tfnclex.org.ph / info@cfo.gov.ph

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL TASK FORCE ON NCLEX

"It is one thing to bring the NCLEX to the Philippines and another matter to keep its conduct secure within our shores. We therefore enjoin the public to assist us in ensuring that the Philippines remains to be a secure international testing site for the NCLEX, a testament to our esteemed reputation as the top provider of health worforce all over the world."

Secretary Dante A. Ang
Chairman
Commission on Filipinos Overseas and
Presidential Task Force on NCLEX

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Manila Memorial Park Cemetery, Inc.

deeply condole with the family of the late

SUSANNE YUCHENGCO SANTOS

Member of the Board of Directors

who peacefully joined our Creator on August 20, 2007.

Her cremated remains lie in state at the Capilla del Señor,
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.
In lieu of flowers, donations to the
Phil-Asia Assistance Foundation, Inc. will be appreciated.

In Loving Memory
on the 1st Death Anniversary of

FRANCISCO "PAQUITO" F. ZALAMEA

on August 23, 2007

The Holy Mass will be offered on August 23, 2007, 10:00 a.m.
at La Resureccion Parish Church, Victoria, Laguna.

We, the family, who remember him so dearly, request relatives, friends and the pious readers to join us in our prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

"Even though I walk in the valley of darkness,
I will fear no evil, for you are with me." Psalm 23:4

Message of Thanks

CELSO SANDOVAL SANTIAGO, JR.

February 27, 1955 - August 8, 2007

*We, **Celso Sr. & Ermelinda Santiago** (parents),
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Caroline, Joy & Chris (children) and
his grandchildren are sincerely grateful for
the overwhelming love, care and concern shown
to us during our time of deep sorrow.*

---

*It is with deep sorrow that
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BENJAMIN CUI ENCARNACION

August 13, 1927 - August 20, 2007

He is survived by 11 children and their spouses and 16 grandchildren and predeceased by his wife **Elisa Santos Encarnacion**, brother **Virgilio Encarnacion** and sister **Milagros Jones**. Loving and good provider to his wife and 11 children.

Ben took pride in his career and was well respected among friends and colleagues. He was an extraordinary man who will be missed by all who knew and loved him.

His remains lie in state at Santa Maria Della Strada, Katipunan Road, Quezon City.

Burial will be on Saturday, August 25, 2007 after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the Ben and Ely Encarnacion U.P. Scholarship Fund. Please address checks to Teresa S. Encarnacion Tadem.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

✝

José Javier Ortoll Zaragoza

August 6, 1943 – August 10, 2007

Passed away in Barcelona in the Grace of the Lord.

A memorial mass will be held at San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, on Thursday, 23 August at 7 p.m.

MORE CLASSIFIED ADS

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NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION	
		DATE & TIME	PLACE
DALISAY LACSON NAZARENO	Superior Chapel	August 23, 2007 11:00 a.m.	Paz Crematory
AILEEN DIZON PERALTA	Chapel - A	August 24, 2007 2:00 p.m.	Paz Crematory

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Kalaw: 528-0213; 527-3342
Megamall: 635-0219; 635-0220

Obituary Requirements:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

EMILIANA T. DELA MERCED

"Ka Miling"

Passed away peacefully on August 21, 2007
at the age of 94.

She will be missed by her loving children **Narciso, Nestor, Norberto Jr.** and **Eleanor**; in-laws, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, other relatives and friends.

Her remains lie in state at Sanctuarium (Chapel Fleur de lis) at 739 G. Araneta Avenue corner Agno St., Barangay Tatalon, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, August 25, 2007 at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES SYSTEM
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals will be received by the UP System Bids and Awards Committee, University of the Philippines System, Diliman, Quezon City, not later than 6:00 pm on September 6, 2007 at the UP System Supply and Property Management Office Basement, Quezon Hall, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City for the selection of Contractor (Renovation of the Executive House).

Total approved budget ceiling: Php 2,900,000.00

The Pre-bid conference will be held on August 24, 2007 at 9:00 am, at UP System Supply and Property Management Office, Basement, Quezon Hall, UP Diliman Campus, Quezon City.

Bid documents at Php 2,900.00 per set are available starting August 22, 2007 at the UP System Supply and Property Management Office, Basement, Quezon Hall, UP Diliman, Quezon City. Contact person: Mr. Isagani L. Bagus. Officer-In-Charge: UP System Supply and Property Management Office. Telefax No.: 926-4919.

The University of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any or all bids, as well as to waive any defect or informality required in such bids, and to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to the University.

(Sgd.) **ARIEL S. BETAN**
Chair, UP System Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--August 22, 2007)

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This supplement will be circulated within Metro Manila and Metro Cebu in time for our 51st anniversary celebration and the 44th PMAP Annual Conference on September 26 to 28 at the Waterfront Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City.

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People, Events & Products

Credit Suisse begins onshore Equity Research in RP

CREDIT SUISSE RECENTLY ANNOUNCED it has started onshore equity research in the Philippines and has appointed two highly rated analysts to the team. Gilbert Lopez has joined as a director and head of research for the Philippines. He reports to Ali Naqvi, head of equity research for Asia ex-Japan.

Lopez, who has 15 years of research experience, covers banks, conglomerates and property. He moved from Macquarie Securities Philippines, where he was ranked number 1 in the Greenwich Europe Survey, number 1 in the Greenwich US Survey and number 2 in the Greenwich Asia survey. He is a certified public accountant and holds a Bachelor of Science in Accountancy degree from De La Salle University.

Edser Trinidad has joined as a vice president to cover telcos and utilities. A telecommunications sector specialist with 13 years of research experience, he has also covered food and beverage and construction. Trinidad, who joined from CLSA Philippines, has an MBA and a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from De La Salle University.

"The appointments of Gilbert and Edser strengthen our equity research offering in Asia ex-Japan and complement our strong investment banking franchise on the ground," said Ali Naqvi. "We see emerging markets as an area of focus and bringing equity research onshore is part of that strategy. We are optimistic about the future outlook of the country and the economy."

Credit Suisse's Asia ex-Japan equity research team is recognized as a premier franchise in the region. The team was ranked number 1 by Starmine in its Asia analyst awards announced this year.

MFI CALAMBA BRANCH LAUNCHED

MFI Technological Institute (formerly Meralco Foundation Institute) held the grand launching and blessing of its Calamba branch located at the 2nd Floor of Calamba Executive Center at the Calamba Crossing in Laguna. The branch is the answer to the training demands of individuals and industry for quality industrial and tech-voc training in the Southern Luzon area. Shown at the ribbon-cutting were (from left) Antonio M. Kosca, chief operating officer and trustee, MFI; Col. Alex T. Escaño, MFI president; Joel Lopa of Jose M. Demetria Cojuangco Foundation Inc and Rev. Fr. Andres Olaso, officiating priest.

14th nat'l PR Congress slated

THE 14TH NATIONAL PUBLIC RElations Congress of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines (PRSP) is set to be held at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City from Sept. 26 to 28.

The Congress brings together hundreds of PR professionals, experts and advocates from business and industry, government, nonprofit organizations, hospitals, schools, hotels and professional services who represent various industries and sectors.

PRSP is the country's premiere organization for public relations professionals. The Society's 50th anniversary celebration is sponsored by Globe Telecom Inc, GMA Network Inc, Landbank, Manila Electric Co, National Power Corp, Philip Morris, Pagcor, San Miguel Corp, Shell Exploration Philippines BV, and United Laboratories Inc. The media partners for the event include BusinessMirror, BusinessWorld, Journal Group of Publications, Manila Bulletin, Manila Standard Today, Philippine Daily Inquirer and Philippine Star.

Early bird registrants can avail of the special rate (P7,000 only for the 3-day congress) until Aug. 31. For details and registration, call 638-0010 and 638-0012, or e-mail prcongress@prsp.ph or log on to www.prsp.ph.

UP LINGUA FRANCA PARTNERS WITH GROLIER-SCHOLASTIC

UP Lingua Franca, an academic organization based in UP Diliman that believes wholly in creating a center of academic excellence, partnered with Grolier-Scholastic, 'The Most Trusted Name in Learning', for the pre-launch symposia of the last Harry Potter book ('Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows'). Avid Harry Potter fans discussed what will happen to the boy wizard and his friends during Harry's last year at Hogwarts. The discussion was well moderated by professor Melecio Fabros (center) and Dr. Rhodora G. Ancheta (beside Fabros). The symposia was part of the weeklong celebration for Lingua Franca's 11th year and was organized by UPLF treasurer Madi Belen (standing 3rd from right) and UPLF president Robs Quiambao (standing 4th from right). For reservations of 'Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows', call 751-6712.

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pH Care Cool Wind is clinically tested by obstetricians and gynecologists. It is available in 60-ml bottle at a suggested retail price of P43.75. It is now available in all major supermarkets and drugstores.

Susanne Yuchengco Santos

" I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

July 31, 1947 - August 20, 2007

Please join us in praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her father, Ambassador Alfonso T. Yuchengco.

Her mother, Paz Sycip Yuchengco(†)

Her brothers and sisters Helen, Bella, Lisa, Boy, Yvonne, Bert, Tito, Lenny(†), and Mark.

Her children Marco and wife Carmen, Guia, Tara, and Miguel.

Her grandchildren Tamika and Nicolo.

Her cremated remains are
at the Capilla del Señor, Santuario de San Antonio Church - Forbes Park, Makati City.

Funeral Mass will be held at 9 a.m., Friday, August 24, 2007
at the Santuario de San Antonio Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to
Phil-Asia Assistance Foundation, Inc.

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The Board of Directors, Management, and Staff
condole with the family of its

Chairperson

Susanne Yuchengco Santos

who peacefully joined her Creator on August 20, 2007

May we request everyone to join us in prayer
for the eternal repose of her soul.

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- Forbes Park, Makati City.

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at the Santuario de San Antonio Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to
Phil-Asia Assistance Foundation, Inc.

BDO tapped for Basic share offer

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

PUBLICLY LISTED ENERGY COMPANY Basic Petroleum Corp. said it has tapped BDO Capital & Investment Corp. as its financial adviser for its planned rights and share offers that may raise a total of P2.75 billion, the firm said in a disclosure to the stock exchange.

Basic Petroleum plans to undertake a stock rights offer this year, hoping to raise P250 million, and a follow-on or additional share offer that may generate P2.5 billion.

Proceeds from the follow-on offer will partly fund a major bioethanol project, officials earlier said.

Basic Petroleum Corp. was recently renamed Basic Energy Corp. to reflect its entry into other forms of energy development, in addition to its oil and gas business.

Basic Petroleum president Oscar de Venecia Jr. had said that the company would spend roughly P1.8 billion largely for a proposed bioethanol plant in Zamboanga del Norte, which would produce 200,000 liters of ethanol a day.

The project is estimated to be operational in two years and will also produce 50 tons of carbon dioxide a day through a six-megawatt cogeneration facility.

The rest of the proceeds would go to oil and gas exploration and production.

Republic Act 9367, or the biofuels law, mandates a 5-percent bioethanol blend with gasoline by 2009, when local demand for fuel is seen to reach 269 million liters a year.

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- Cost of Capital, and
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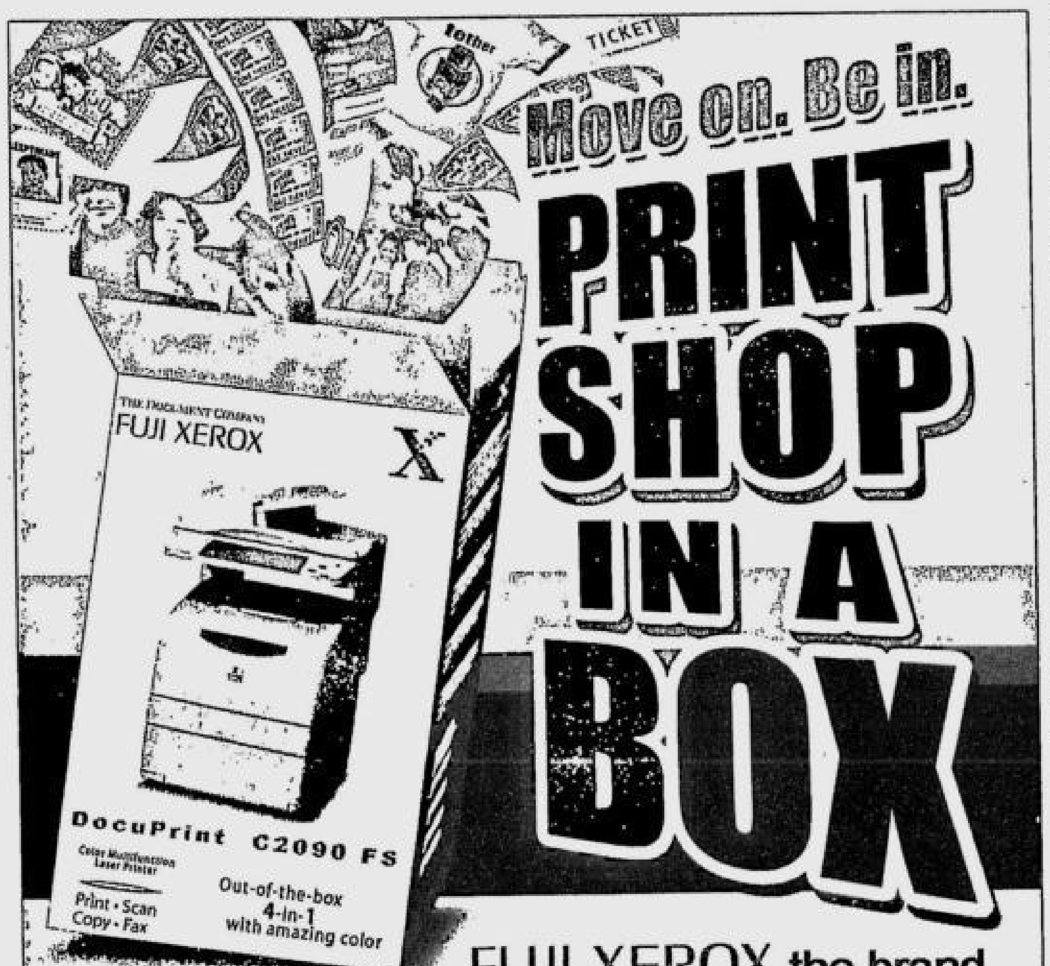
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Moody's lowers SMC rating

CREDIT RATING agency Moody's downgraded San Miguel's debt rating to Ba2 from Ba1 on Tuesday due to lingering uncertainty over the the company's plan to diversify into heavy industry.

"The concern is on two fronts: The uncertainty of the new investment, and the impact on the company's business and financial profile," said Renee Lam, senior Moody's analyst in Hong Kong.

"The Ba1 had incorporated an expectation that San Miguel's financial profile would strengthen."

San Miguel declined to comment.

The group's A shares, which are restricted to local investors, rose 4.2 percent. Its B stock, open to all, climbed 5.8 percent.

Southeast Asia's largest food and drinks group unnerved investors in May when it announced it would diversify into mining, power, property and other heavy industries at home, and spin off its flagship domestic beer business to raise funds.

The group later said it would invest about P35 billion in new ventures, and these new business would account for about 10 percent of its total assets.

Lam said restricting the investments alleviated some of the uncertainty, but she said San Miguel's weak performance in the first half was a second reason for the downgrade. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 21, 2007)

52-WKS HIGH	52-WKS LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.4	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	9.2	10	9.2	9.2	55,000
73	32.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	56.5	58.5	55.5	58	2,241,300
73.5	51.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	57.5	60.5	56	59.5	7,728,700
935	630	China Banking Corp.	810	840	810	820	6,300
23.5	18.5	Citystate Savings Bank	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.38	0.39	2,920,000
75.5	36.5	Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.	52	52.5	51	51.5	5,441,100
65.5	32.5	Philippine National Bank	45	45	43.5	44.5	525,000
68	41	Philippine Savings Bank	60	60	59.5	59.5	5,300
39.57	14.35	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	23.75	24	23.5	24	5,736,500
90	47	Security Bank Corp.	68.5	73	68.5	69	1,145,300
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	51.5	52.5	51.5	52.5	331,600
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
5.6	1.76	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	4	4	4	4	13,000
1.98	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.8	1.96	1.8	1.94	16,676,000
16.25	1.84	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	9.5	10.75	9.5	10.75	642,000
42	28	First Metro Investment Corp.	40.5	41	40.5	41	5,900
1,725.00	1,555.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,675.00	1,700.00	1,675.00	1,680.00	1,130
5	2.95	Nat'l Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	3.15	3.25	3.1	3.15	9,144,000
3.1	1	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	43,000
1,005.00	219	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.	705	730	705	720	6,270
2,250.00	1,945.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,150.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	370
1.94	1.3	IVantage Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	995,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
6.2	3.8	Aboitiz Power Corp.	4.3	4.5	4.3	4.45	15,151,000
0.57	0.23	East Asia Power Resources Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.23	0.25	180,000
70	42	First Gen Corp.	60.5	61	60	60.5	1,956,600
92	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	70	73	70	73	992,200
15	8.8	Manila Water Company Inc.	12.25	13.5	12.25	13.5	8,064,700
116	15.75	Manila Electric Company A	82	88	81	88	509,900
118	25	Manila Electric Company B	83.5	90	83	90	3,764,400
7	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.2	12,123,000
6.5	3.75	Petron Corp.	4.65	5.3	4.65	5	20,278,000
14.75	6.7	Phoenix Petroleum Philippines Inc.	6.8	7.9	6.8	7.8	138,000
1.9	0.92	Trans-Asia Oil & Energy Dev't Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.14	1,051,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
6.3	2.9	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2	60,000
2.95	1.86	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	1.9	2	1.9	1.96	488,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24	24	24	24	2,000
61	31.5	Jollibee Foods Corp.	49	53	49	53	1,789,400
8.5	4.6	Pancake House Inc.	8.4	8.4	8.4	8.4	12,000
1.96	0.78	RFM Corp.	1.5	1.54	1.48	1.54	293,000
4.05	2.06	Roxas Holdings	2.16	2.2	2.16	2.16	539,000
80	59	San Miguel Corp. A	60.5	61.5	60.5	61.5	8,400
88	60	San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	407,800
0.66	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.47	0.5	440,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	15.75	16.25	15.75	16.25	2,417,600
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRSTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
6.1	1.57	EEI Corp.	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	4,809,000
21.5	6	Federal Chemicals Inc.	9.2	10	9.2	9.3	1,774,000
9.2	4.5	Holcim Philippines Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	6,723,000
7	1.28	Republic Cement Corp.	4.1	4.15	4.1	4.15	130,000
2	0.27	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.99	0.93	0.95	1,420,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	3.1	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	3.8	4.15	3.8	4.05	3,432,000
1.46	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	40,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.75	0.085	Picop Resources Inc.	0.32	0.34	0.32	0.34	37,160,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.8	A. Soriano Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.15	3.2	97,000
0.17	0.025	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.0775	0.08	0.075	0.075	29,800,000
1.28	0.21	APC Group Inc.	0.52	0.59	0.52	0.57	13,400,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. A	3	3.2	2.95	3	6,780,000
3.45	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. B	3.45	3.45	3.2	3.2	858,000
0.018	0.007	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. A	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	127,000,000
0.019	0.0075	Abacus Cons. Res. & Hold'gs Inc. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.2	1,325,000
0.021	0.0075	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	302,100,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	4.15	4.3	4	4	37,800,000
1.38	0.49	Alsons Cons. Resources Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	100,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.9	2,012,000
590	341.67	Ayala Corp.	430	465	430	465	569,950
14.5	7.04	Bacnotan Cons. Industries Inc.	12	12	12	12	48,500
5.8	1.06	Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.95	4	3.9	4	30,248,000
10.25	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.8	7.4	7.5	4,871,000
6.9	1	Eton Properties Philippines Inc.	3.75	3.8	3.6	3.8	120,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	243,000
14.5	5.6	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	9.6	9.6	9.5	9.5	21,000
5.9	0.61	Jolliville Holdings Corp.	1.52	1.74	1.5	1.5	452,000
11.5	0.33	Multitech Investments Corp.	3.75	3.95	3.5	3.8	5,135,000
8.2	2.8	PAL Holdings Inc.	5.8	5.9	5.5	5.8	240,000
0.75	0.17	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	300,000
452.5	202.36	SM Investments Corp.	320	337.5	315	335	382,740
0.73	0.125	Sinophil Corp.	0.29	0.31	0.29	0.3	13,650,000
1.6	0.85	South China Resources Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.14	1.3	30,000
23	1	TKC Steel Corp.	15.5	16.25	15.5	15.5	29,700
0.75	0.1	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.31	0.35	0.31	0.34	8,570,000
1.1	0.155	Zeus Holdings Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
		PROPERTY					
2.34	0.78	A Brown Company Inc.	1.06	1.08	1.06	1.08	310,000
8.9	5	Anchor Land Holdings Inc.	6.4	6.4	5	6.4	1,887,000
1.06	0.32	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.64	0.67	0.64	0.67	1,540,000
19.25	10.83	Ayala Land Inc.	14	14.5	14	14	39,023,700
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.08	3,360,000
4.7	2.18	Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	20,000
2.1	1.2	Cebu Property Venture & Dev't Corp. B	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
0.86	0.29	Crown Equities Inc.	0.6	0.66	0.6	0.65	2,360,000
0.83	0.24	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	370,000
0.99	0.45	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.68	0.7	70,190,000
0.47	0.048	Ever Gotesco Res. and Hold'gs Inc.	0.18	0.21	0.18	0.205	12,700,000
1.48	0.4	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.06	1.06	1	1.04	7,400,000
2.44	1.07	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.4	1.54	1.4	1.5	52,567,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	10,000
1.12	0.24	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.57	0.6	0.54	0.54	1,910,000
4.4	1.54	Megaworld Corp.	2.95	3.15	2.95	3.1	44,712,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	3.25	3.25	3.25	3.25	9,000
0.7	0.125	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.3	0.31	0.28	0.3	690,000
0.87	0.32	Phil. Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.38	0.39	0.37	0.38	9,010,000
23	12	Robinson Land Corp.	14.75	16.5	14.75	16.25	5,804,200
5.9	1.37	SM Development Corp.	3.65	3.75	3.55	3.65	1,379,000
13.5	6.08	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	10.25	11	9.9	10.75	16,684,000
1.34	0.46	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.5	0.51	1,330,000
0.49	0.08	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.26	0.24	0.26	3,240,000
7.5	3.65	Vista Land and Lifescapes Inc.	4.85	5.1	4.75	5.1	8,033,000
		MEDIA					
38.5	15.75	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	30	32	30	31.5	74,700
11.75	8.7	GMA Network Inc.	9.3	9.6	9.3	9.4	2,117,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	1.2	1.24	1.18	1.24	5,058,000
1,445.00	970	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,230.00	1,345.00	1,230.00	1,330.00	167,450
2,820.00	1,890.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,400.00	2,530.00	2,400.00	2,520.00	175,000
7.9	3.7	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.2	6.5	6.2	6.5	2,870,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.185	0.19	10,890,000
12	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	10	10	9.6	9.6	51,000
11.5	2	IPVG Corp.	8.1	8.4	8.1	8.3	2,083,000
0.065	0.027	ISM Communications Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.03	0.03	31,300,000
29.5	8	Imperial Resources Inc. A	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	3,200
0.32	0.043	Island Info and Technology Inc.	0.18	0.185	0.175	0.175	82,800,000
2.08	1.1	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	51,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.045	0.049	0.045	0.049	682,900,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Grp Int'l. Inc.	2.4	2.85	2.4	2.6	3,557,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
6.8	2.95	Asian Terminals Inc.	4.1	4.9	4.1	4.9	713,000
34.5	14.75	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28.5	31	28.5	31	839,500
2.16	0.93	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.64	1.68	1.64	1.68	680,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.52	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	2.7	2.9	2.65	2.8	2,853,000
0.98	0.28	Premiere Entertainment Prod'ns Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.42	0.45	680,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.75	0.99	0.75	0.78	5,300,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.65	2.75	83,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
6	1.9	Macroasia Corp.	4.5	4.65	4.25	4.4	693,000
17.25	9.8	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	10.5	11	10.25	11	924,000
30	9.9	Paxys Inc.	13.25	13.75	13	13	1,309,100
		MINING					
0.018	0.008	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.0095	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	192,000,000
7.6	3.6	Apex Mining Company Inc. A	4	4.3	4	4.25	402,000
7.7	3.85	Apex Mining Company Inc. B	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	70,000
21.25	7.7	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	11.25	12	11.25	12	4,078,700
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. A	9.8	9.8	9.5	9.5	62,000
3.1	0.33	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	1.22	1.36	1.2	1.32	176,997,000
0.35	0.18	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	7,070,000
0.42	0.22	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. B	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	1,100,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. A	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.019	372,200,000
0.041	0.019	Manila Mining Corp. B	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	52,400,000
30	1.2	NiHAO Minerals Resources Int'l Inc.	9	9.2	8.6	9.1	2,504,000
0.021	0.0079	Omico Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.01	0.012	846,000,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	4.85	5	4.85	5	14,594,000
43	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	27	27	27	27	600
1.36	0.39	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.74	0.86	0.74	0.86	490,000
1.8	0.56	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.04	1.1	7,300,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.25	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	830,000
0.025	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. A	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	249,900,000
0.027	0.01	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. B	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	77,800,000
13	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	20,000
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.017	0.018	0.017	0.018	727,300,000

AVERAGES				VOLUME	VALUE
Financial	844.94	UP	53.18	53,663,370	1,206,186,395.00
Industrial	4,356.46	UP	404.66	126,154,000	1,175,571,665.00
Holding Firms	1,766.54	UP	173.29	587,143,190	768,256,830.00
Property	1,429.20	UP	118.27	284,548,900	1,157,896,955.00
Service	1,522.33	UP	132.70	838,181,950	858,848,325.00
Mining & Oil	5,007.78	UP	535.63	2,733,118,300	419,293,955.00
All Shares Index	2,106.16	UP	150.94		
PSEI	3,167.52	UP	283.18		
		GRAND TOTALS		**4,622,809,710**	**5,586,054,125.00**

COMPILED BY SCHATZI QUODALA, INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK, PSE

Asian stocks extend rally, HK up on China move

HONG KONG—ASIAN STOCKS extended gains yesterday as credit concerns eased and a softer yen lifted Japanese exporters, while a move by China to let residents invest directly in Hong Kong securities gave the Hang Seng Index a fillip.

European markets were also expected to rise in opening trade, taking heart from gains in Asian stocks and a late rally on Wall Street.

Investor confidence was slowly recovering after the US Federal Reserve sought to calm markets by slashing a key US bank lending rate on Friday, although concerns about a global credit shortage continued to linger.

The latest casualty of the US mortgage crisis was Capital One Financial Corp., which said it would cut 1,900 jobs and shut down a wholesale mortgage unit.

"Even though we saw strong gains yesterday, there is still lingering concern about the impact from the US subprime issue to the US economy. We'll still see high volatility," said Kim Joong-hyun, an analyst at Goodmorning Shinhan Securities in South Korea.

Underlining persistent doubts about the health of financial markets, Australia's central bank once again pumped sizeable amounts of cash into its banking system to help meet short-term mismatches in liquidity.

MSCI's measure of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan climbed 1.2 percent, extending Monday's 6-percent surge—its biggest one-day gain since September 1998.

The MSCI index is now about 10 percent above a five-month trough plumbed last Friday, but still 13 percent below the July 24 record high.

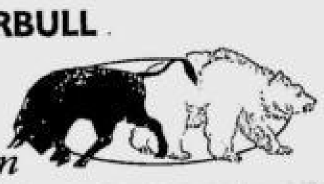
Tokyo's Nikkei average closed 1.1-percent higher, adding to Monday's 3-percent rise, as investors bought exporters such as Sony Corp. and Canon Inc. following declines in the yen.

Exporters tend to benefit from a weaker currency as it boosts the value of overseas sales.

With stocks rising and confidence edging back, the yen continued to unwind a recent rally fueled by a drop in risk appetite. *Reuters*

Quo vadis

MR. BEARBULL



Ron Nathan

A WOMAN IN EDSA STOPPED HER CAR for a red light. However, when the light turned green again, she stayed right where she was. After the light had changed several times and she still hadn't moved, the policeman finally went to over her and inquired politely. "What's the matter lady, haven't we got any colors you like."

While my wife was washing the dishes, I said, "Would you like to go out, girl?" Rather surprised, she said, "Oh, I would love to." We went to Serendra and dined in one of the many fine restaurants. We had such a wonderful evening that I was afraid to confess that I had been addressing the dog.

I just read that at 70, there are five women to every man. Isn't that a bad time to get these odds?

Two friends of mine of similar age were playing cards. Suddenly, one looked up at the other and said, "Don't get mad at me but I just can't remember your name, I have thought and thought but it just won't come to me. Please tell me what you name is?" Her friend glared at her for at least three minutes and said finally, "How soon do you need to know?"

A phone answering machine said, "If you want to buy marijuana, press the hash key."

Somebody actually complimented me on my driving today. I found a note on the windscreen, which said PARKING FINE.

I told my doctor that I hurt my arm in several places. He said, "Don't go there any more."

A man took his German Shepherd to the vet. "My dog is cross-eyed. Is there anything you can do for him? The vet picks up the dog, examines his eyes and checks his teeth. Finally, he says, I am going to have to put him down." "Why?" said the owner. "Just because he is cross-eyed?" "No," said the vet. "Because he is really heavy."

* * *

Calling the top of the market five weeks ago was not very difficult as it was certain that the subprime mortgage problem was going to spread across the planet like a bubonic plague; calling the bottom will be infinitely more difficult as we have insufficient information on which to make an intelligent guess. Ten years ago, when hedge funds barely existed and were relatively unimportant, it was easy to track mortgages.

If you bought through a property company, the company itself probably arranged the mortgage and possibly accommodated a second one. If you bought through a builder, he would put you in touch with his broker; if you bought through the bank, either the bank itself would extend you a mortgage or it would pass you on to one of its friendly brokers, so the trail was easy to follow.

Now there are 9,000 hedge funds trading in mortgages and subprimes in an effort to obtain a higher yield than can be obtained from US treasury notes or bank deposits. They are not registered, are responsible to nobody except their investors, they are not subject to any regulations, do not usually pay taxes and can go long or short on stocks, bonds, currencies and commodities. They do not cause problems but they increase volatility so that when a problem arises, their actions tend to make it worse. This is the current situation.

Initially, PAULSON played down the seriousness of the problem and said that subprime mortgages only totaled $100 billion and were insignificant compared with the economy. Recently, the figure has been doubled to $200 billion and I have seen a recent estimate of $500 billion. Nobody really knows and probably never will. BERNANKE has admitted that there is a downside threat to the economy and has reduced the interbank lending rate by 0.5 percent. Together with central banks worldwide, he is making as much liquidity as is necessary available to the banks.

Investors became euphoric on Friday and the DOW opened 322 points higher though it did not hold all its gain. It is being assumed that the FED will reduce rates on Sept. 18 by as much as half a percentage point to 4.75 percent and possibly again before the end of the year. I am not convinced that this scenario is correct and if he does cut interest rates, it is more likely to be by 0.25 percentage point. Making unlimited liquidity available is a necessary evil but it is also inflationary so he will again be torn between growth and inflation, a rock and a hard place. Only Iceland is unaffected as they build igloos and in their freezing climate, it is unlikely there will be a meltdown.

Although we do not know the extent of the hedge funds' position regarding prime and subprime mortgages, we can be certain that there will be a lot of redemptions following the failure of several hedge funds. Most have a lockup period of one or two years but most investors have invested longer than this so they can issue notices of redemption. Some hedge funds require six months notice so they have more time to unravel their positions in an orderly manner and obtain the best terms possible. Others only require 45 days redemption notice and liquidate on the quarter days so investors had to issue redemption notices by Aug. 15 for redemption on Sept. 30. These funds do not have the luxury of time and will fare worse.

Ultimately, a number of hedge funds will disappear or at least be reduced in size. Hopefully, they will exert less influence in the future but for the next six months, volatility will remain, more bad news will emerge and markets will react, so while the worst has probably been seen, a rocky road still lies ahead. Readers who ignored my sell signal five weeks ago should probably stick it out now, rather than cut losses of up to 50 percent on second and third liners.

China continues to grow unabated at 11.9 percent but is now encountering inflation problems. Consumer expenditure is rising at 5.6 percent and food is rising 15.6 percent due to a shortage of pigs. I find this ironic in the Year of the Pig. Exports surged by 34 percent, which is embarrassing, and there are doubts about the safety and quality of Chinese products. After the recall of 18 million toys, including millions of Barbie dolls, there was a Barbie queue at the docks. Another bank rate increase is certain as industrial production grew by 18.5 percent.

The sudden rise in the strength of the yen is likely to push the country's fragile economy back into stagnation or a period of low growth. It will make Japan's exports less competitive and reduce company profits. This is important because Japan is the world's second largest economy, currently much bigger than China.

At home, the PSEi has taken a terrible beating and most IPOs are now standing at substantial discounts. There will be few takers for future issues and we are now a nation of IPO-condriacs. Several will be cancelled or deferred.

Had it not been for the contribution by PNOC-EDC from the sale of its 20-percent stake, the BIR would have missed its target for the seventh successive month. The government is trying to cover it up but it looks increasingly doubtful whether the P63-billion deficit target can be attained. There is no certainty that the remaining 40-percent stake will fetch the same price and the government might have to settle for less. There are grave doubts as to whether the sale of SMC will proceed, as there is no agreement as to who owns it. PCOR and PNB are insufficient to plug the gap, as are some properties in Japan.

Yesterday, the PSEi followed all the other financial centers and opened nearly 200 points higher. Foreign sellers turned net buyers and the market continued to advance, closing almost 10-percent higher at the best of the day. The DOW futures are flat so it is pure guesswork as to how Wall Street will react tonight but whatever it does, we are sure to follow. *nathan.ronald@gmail.com*

CURRENCIES

August 21, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.741730	1.000000	46.8590
Japan	Yen	0.006454	0.008701	0.4077
United Kingdom	Pound	1.474781	1.988300	93.1697
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.094871	0.127905	5.9935
Switzerland	Franc	0.615441	0.829738	38.8807
Canada	Dollar	0.703462	0.948407	44.4414
Singapore	Dollar	0.485393	0.654407	30.6649
Australia	Dollar	0.594716	0.801796	37.5714
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.967661	2.652801	124.3076
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.197768	0.266631	12.4941
Brunei	Dollar	0.483810	0.652273	30.5649
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000079	0.000107	0.0050
Thailand	Baht	0.022683	0.030581	1.4330
UAE	Dirham	0.201957	0.272279	12.7587
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.348200	63.1753
Korea	Won	0.000787	0.001061	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.097762	0.131803	6.1762
ArgentinaPeso	0.235320	0.317259	14.8664	
Brazil	Real	0.366286	0.493827	23.1402
Denmark	Kroner	0.134398	0.181196	8.4907
India	Rupee	0.018131	0.024444	1.1454
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212774	0.286862	13.4421
Mexico	New Peso	0.066745	0.089985	4.2166
New Zealand	Dollar	0.518040	0.698422	32.7274
South Africa	Rand	0.100779	0.135870	6.3667
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022552	0.030404	1.4247

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—Aug. 20, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen. ** Asian time closing rate as of Aug. 20, 2007

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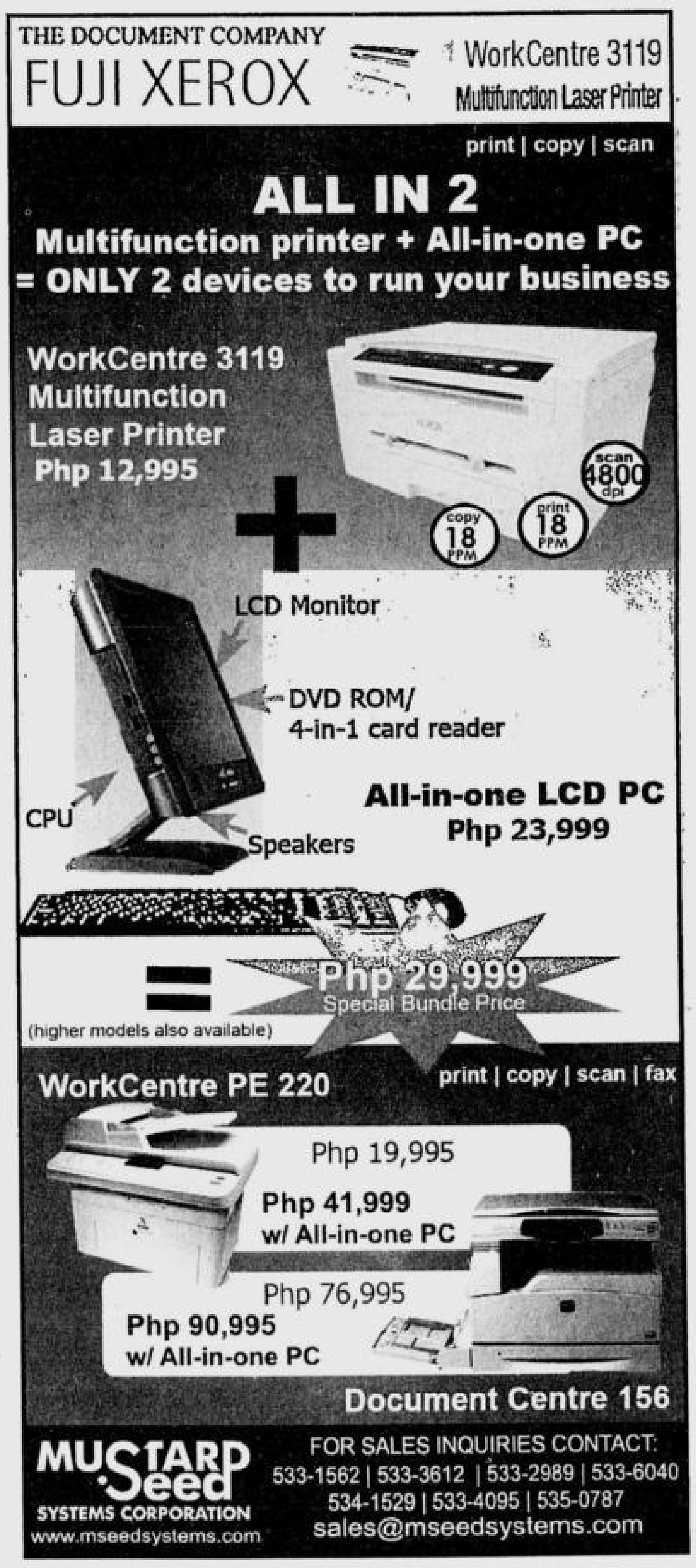

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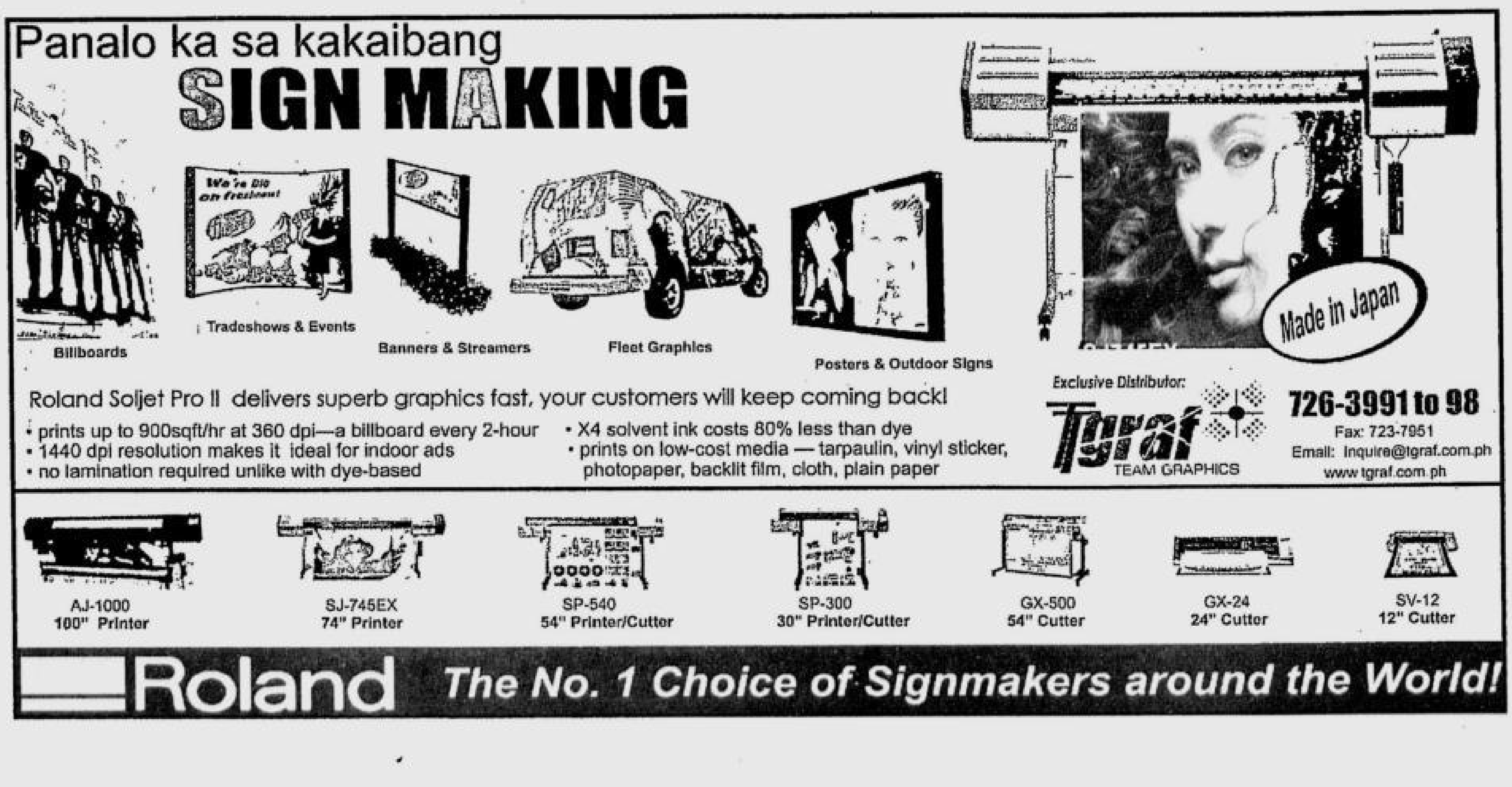

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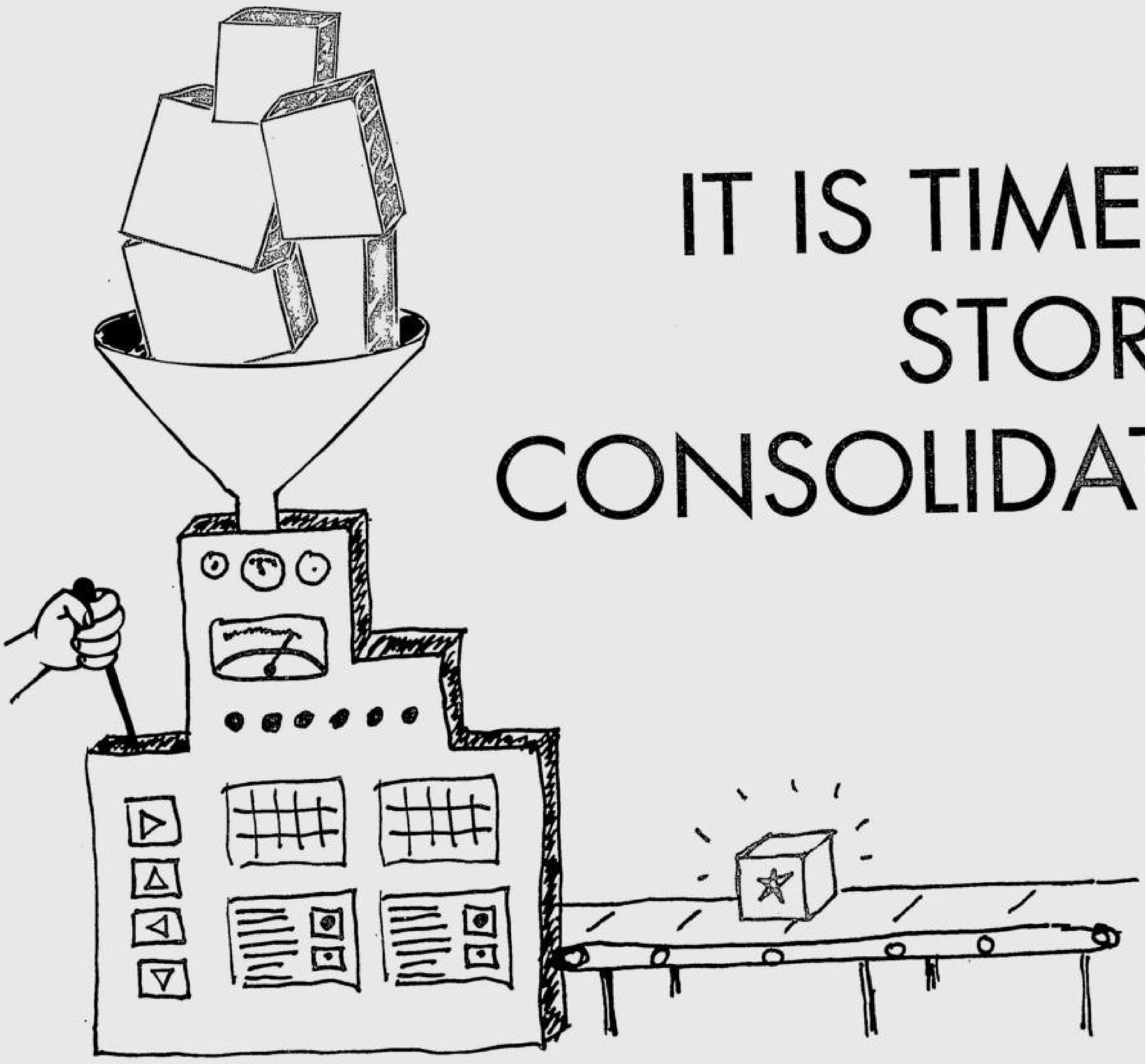

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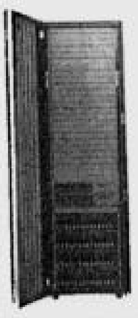

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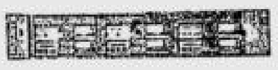

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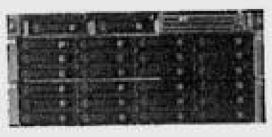

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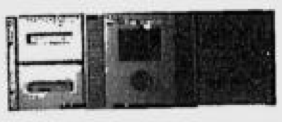

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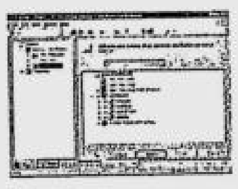

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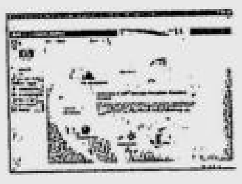

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MOTORING

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TARTARINI
TARTARINI
POWERED

MICHELLE spent a measly P200 in gas (break from her usual P1,500 fuel per practice) because her car was equipped with an LPG kit courtesy of Tartarinni LPG.

20 questions for woman drifter

By Tessa R. Salazar

YOU'VE HEARD OF THE OFten-repeated expression "you drive me in circles." Well, this lady drifter takes that to its full literal potential.

Meet Michelle Yu, who claims to be the first woman drifter in the country. A relative newcomer into the sport, she joined her first tire-burning competition on Aug. 12, after completing her training just few months before that, on June 21 to be exact. Nevertheless, out of the 26 seasoned, almost all-male participants, she finished 17th, almost making it to the top 16 cutoff.

The setback hasn't dampened her spirits one bit. And INQUIRER Motoring just caught

20 QUESTIONS/ B2-2

DRIVETHRU AUTOPLUS DRIVETHRU AUTOPLUS DRIVETHRU AUTOPLUS DRIVETHRU AUTOPLUS DRIVETHRU AUTOPLUS

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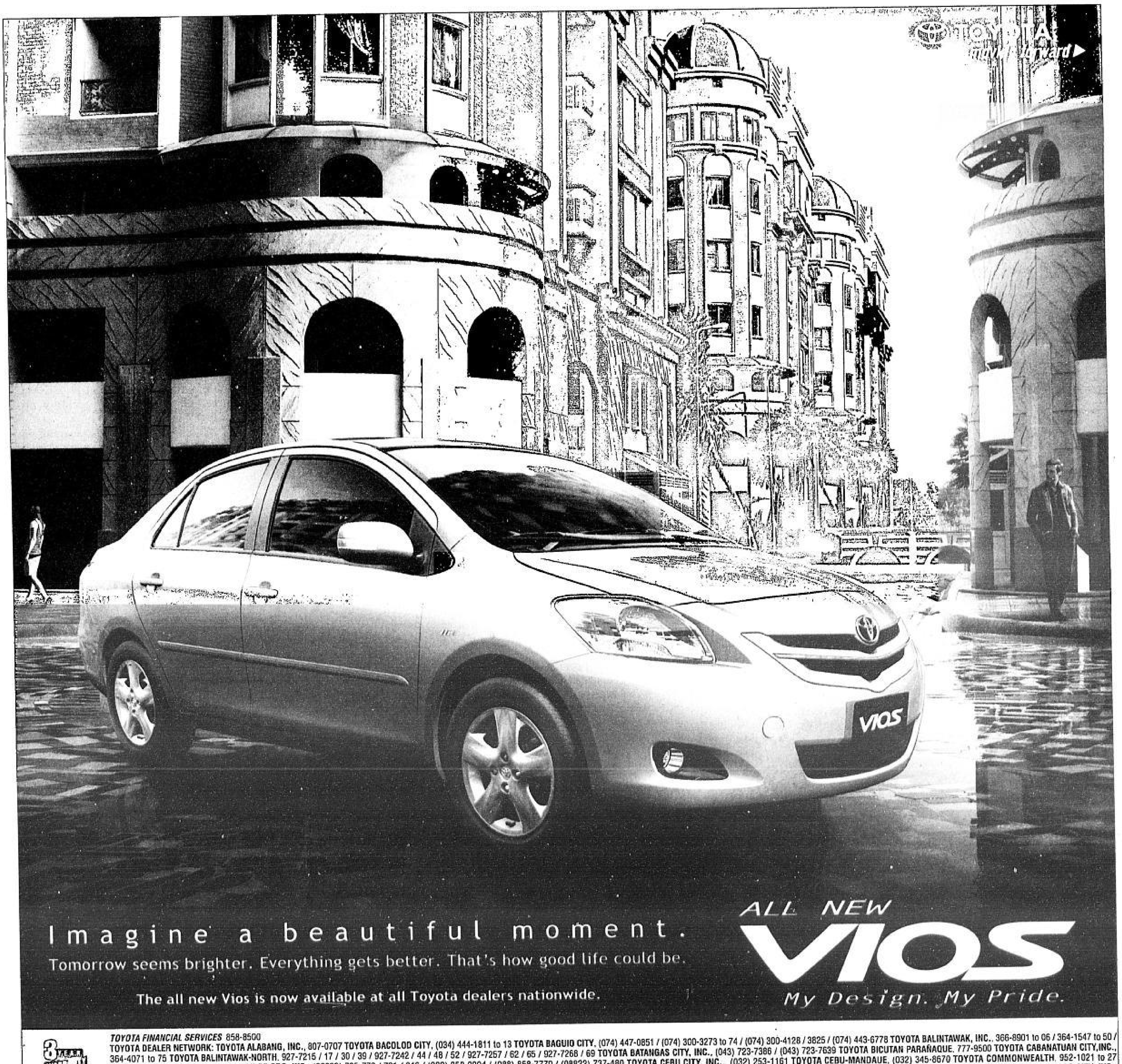

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20 questions for woman drifter

From page B2-1

Michelle in a rare moment of stillness. So, enough of beating around the bushes, let's get up close and straight with this young woman before she takes off again in a blur.

1 How different is your "regular" car from your "drift" car?

My daily car is just like any normal car out on the market. There are no performance modifications. I'm using the school car because since I only learned last June, my real drift car would not be finished until end of this year. It's an '89 (Nissan) Cefiro with an RB25 turbo engine. The drift car can also be used as an everyday car, but it's set up with all the performance modifications needed.

2 Do you consider yourself an aggressive street driver?

Before I got into motorsports I was short-fused. But now I can say I'm not. I'd still prefer safety on the streets and prefer to take aggression on the tracks.

3 Are there any specific car parts you choose exclusively for drifting (e.g. type of brakes, seats)?

A stiff suspension for handling, racing clutch, roll bar, seam welded (for stiffer chassis), racing seats (when you drift G forces come at you so you have to stay on your seat, normal car seats won't do), bigger aftermarket brakes. There are other additions like gauges, dampers and the like for better performance. And the most important are tires, and lots of them.

4 Are you the only "lady drifter" in the country?

I can say I am the first lady drifter who seriously pursued the sport. Flying back and forth from Manila to Cebu every other week since June 21 to practice and prepare for the event. There is another one who recently joined.

5 Have you ever had to do any drift maneuvers when you were driving in Metro Manila's streets?

Ah, if I answer this question the MMDA would probably be tracking me down and laughs (hahaha). Like I said before, safety first, unless it was a drift demo. You tend to look at things in a different view after learning and loving the sport.

6 Comment on this statement: "Life, like drifting, is controlled chaos. You attempt to have control of something essentially unpredictable."

Yes, I definitely believe that, because drifting as defined by its godfather David Feliciano and the present lateral D champion Alex Perez—who are both my teachers—is putting your car out of control on purpose and controlling it. We all don't have full control of our lives. We just live it day to day, right? We can always try to do all the things we believe is right.

7 If you were to entice other girls to participate in drifting, how would you do it? How would you explain this sport to the other ladies?

I would explain to them not to get intimidated by the sport. That it's fun as well as competitive. I would also tell them that drifting is just like any sport that would require dedication. But in anything that we do, we can't just wake up and be good at it, it would take a lot of seat time and tires to burn to get there.

8 How much of drifting requires pure talent, how much practice? How long do you practice in a day, or week?

I think drifting requires 20 to 30 percent car, if your car is set up the wrong way it won't drift. The rest is the skill of the driver. Practice would mean how many tires you have. If you have unlimited supply of tires to burn you can practice every day. We normally practice the whole day but on intervals.

9 How many tires do you usually use up in a race or practice session? How much fuel?

In a drift practice, we can easily finish two sets in minutes. In last week's competition I finished 2-3 sets. With fuel, I normally use up P1,000 to P1,500 worth of gas. But last race the car was sponsored by Tartarinni LPG and was equipped by an LPG kit so I only spent P200 of gas and a full tank of LPG.

10 Have you ever gotten a mouthful from environmentalists attacking the "wastefulness" of the sport? What would you tell them?

So far with this issue, none yet.

11 What got you into drifting? Why not regular racing, too?

I started getting into setting up cars last 2000. I started with sounds setup, drag racing and even took lessons on circuit, but drifting is just different. The atmosphere, adrenalin and the most important is the company. After my lessons I couldn't stop smiling for a week and looked forward to the next time I would be able to drift. And it's still how I feel now after the race last weekend.

12 Who trained you in this sport? Who do you look up to?

I would like to give the credit to DMF Drift schools resident instructor and present Lateral D champion Alex Perez. And David Feliciano who taught me and continues to teach me advanced techniques. I look up to them as my mentors for being so precise and skillful with the sport.

13 Do you also market the tires you use? Which ones have you found the toughest, which ones the best suited for drifting?

So far I don't have a tire sponsor yet. But Federal Tires are the event sponsors for this year. And they have tires specifically designed for drifting. The model would depend on the size of your rims, and the size of the rims would depend on the power of the car.

14 If money was no object, what would be your car of choice for drifting? Why?

A Nissan Sylvia s15. It has everything—the looks, the power and ability to drift already in place.

15 Aside from the tires, which part of the car takes the heaviest punishment?

The engine and the chassis, you would normally rev high most of the time and the G force applied to the chassis from going sideways. That is why stiffening the chassis is very important if you want to preserve the life of the car.

16 Do you get bored easily when someone drives for you?

I normally don't let anyone drive for me. I would always prefer to drive myself anywhere I go. Even if most of the time I am the only woman in the group. I still drive my own car even if all the passengers are guys.

17 Have you had any near death experiences during drift runs? None so far, the organizers ensure safety is first. And make sure all the rules are followed.

18 As a drifter, what would be your highest goals? When do you plan to attain it?

My goal is to be the champion soon and eventually enter into D1 (D1 is the international drift competition, no Philippine participant yet, what more if a girl is sent to represent the Philippines). Then she laughs.

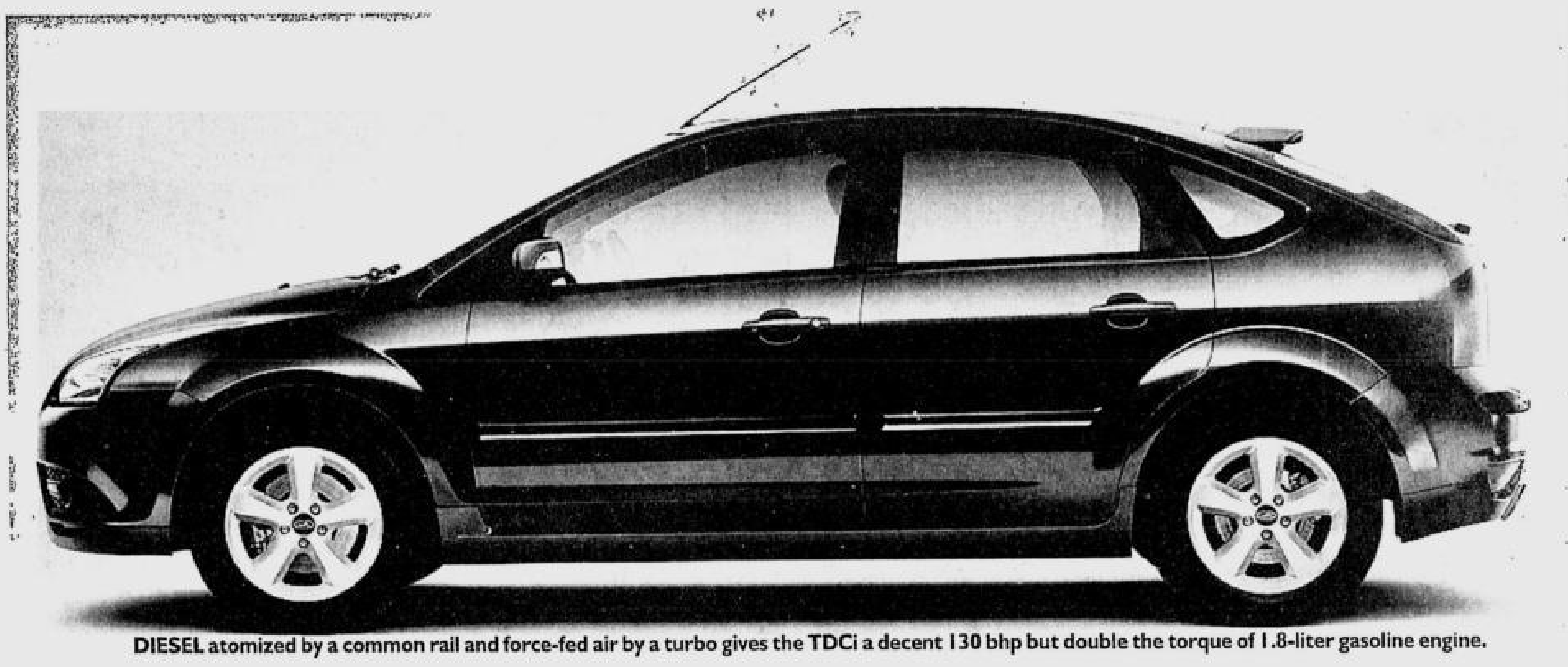
19 What is your parents more afraid of: you driving alone at midnight or you competing in a vicious drift race?

My mom is always worried, as a parent I can't take that away from her. But I always remind her that it's safe and I would not be reckless.

20 Have you driven potential suitors out of their minds when you literally took them out for a spin? Would you want your boyfriend/husband to be a better driver than you?

Of course I want to be the better driver (laughs). I normally intimidate them before. But I'm blessed to have a boyfriend who supports me all the way. And he is also an exceptional driver but prefers to set up cars with looks rather than to compete.

Michelle is supported by Rota Wheels, "Hotwire TV" (on Studio 23 every Sunday at 1 p.m.); Autoindustriya.com; Motul fluid force; Recaro racing seats, and Alvin Uy.



DIESEL atomized by a common rail and force-fed air by a turbo gives the TDCi a decent 130 bhp but double the torque of 1.8-liter gasoline engine.

Diesel Focus

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

FOUR DAYS INTO THE TEST DRIVE of the Ford Focus TDCi Sport and I find myself not wanting to give it back just yet. Mind you, this is something of a personal surprise, as it was easy to part with the other members of the Focus family that I've tested over the past two years. Something was always out of place, something just didn't seem right.

For all the WRC-related advertising, the Focus just never came across as the sharpest tool in the shed, when it came to carving up the open road. Blessed with an able chassis, like the other members of the extended Ford C1 platform family, like the Volvo S40/V50/C70 and the Mazda3, this was a car that begged to be flogged but just came up short four times out of five.

Main culprits

The main culprits in the underwhelming nature of the five-door hatch are easy to identify. Ho-hum engines were mated to long, highway geared transmissions. Add to this that the Focus hatch is not a light car either, with curb weight numbers similar to executive sedans from previous generations. The result is passenger car passing itself off as a sport hatch.

Thankfully, after two years of obvious mediocrity, things are starting to change. Startling too is the fact that Ford seems to have gotten this one sorted. And this lucky break has come at a crucial time. The Ford Focus TDCi Sport is the quarter court, buzzer beating, Game Seven trey, in triple overtime for this particular model. This car ties the scores with the opposition, forcing another extension period. Well, at least the game isn't over yet, right?

Center of all attention

In the center of all the attention is the unexpected choice of engine. Diesel atomized by a common rail and force-fed air by a turbo gives the TDCi a decent 130 bhp but double the torque of 1.8-liter gasoline engine. What translates into serious pull it its 320 Nm of twist and this is no joke.

Then they add the six-speed manual, with a third ratio straight out of your local amusement park. This makes the TDCi Focus markedly quicker than its lesser gasoline-powered brethren and actually amusing to drive. An engine with decent performance is always a nice thing to see mated to an able chassis.

It is coming to the final verdict on this car that makes me hesitant to end my test drive so quickly. Practically brand new and out of the showroom, I've few mechanical complaints about the car.

If someone promised me today that the Focus TDCi will stay as sharp and solid as it is now for the next 100,000 km, then whip out the checkbooks, ladies and gentlemen, this one's a keeper. But we all know cars never stay showroom shiny forever, and diesel engines have a nasty habit of losing compression over time, especially with the quality of local diesel fuels.

So far, so good

All I can say about the Ford Focus TDCi Sport is so far, so good. Don't ask too much from it and it performs impeccably. Five-door hatches are practical creatures, first and foremost. Grocery runs can be fun in this car but do you really want to scramble the week's eggs before you get to the kitchen? Forgetting the Sport branding could actually help the market accept this vehicle better.

If one thinks of this diesel Focus as a handy, everyday vehicle that runs on a fuel cheaper than gas, then maybe you've really understood this car. The increased performance is merely the cherry on top of the sundae, the free upsized drink that comes with your value meal, the garlic chips in your peanuts. You get the picture.

Rather than a car that makes diesel sexier, the Ford Focus TDCi is a car that makes the choice of a diesel passenger car more acceptable. The more vehicles out there break the mold that diesel is a fuel solely for utility and public transport, the greater our choices as consumers will be in the near future. Imagine, the Europeans have been at the luxury diesel game for a while. The Koreans have also joined the CRDi passenger car formula. Now Ford enters with the diesel Focus. Who's next? Your guess is as good as mine.

FOCUS TDCi Sport

Chery rolls out 1 millionth unit

TODAY MARKS CHERY AUTOMOBILE's release of its 1 millionth car off line, becoming the first privately owned Chinese car manufacturer to do so.

"This is unprecedented in China's auto industry since it only took Chery 93 months since releasing its first car (Chery Fulwin) off line on Dec. 18, 1999," reported Tito Yupangco, dealership network manager of Iseway Motors Philippines, Chery's exclusive distributor in the country.

He added that Chery's investments in research and development, cost control, marketing innovation and quality control as well as its global sales push have contributed in the company's rapid growth.

Currently, Chery is being distributed in 29 nations—the latest being the Philippines.

In fact, five models have already reached our shores: the QQ3, which is the most affordable in its class at P319,000 (base model); the Crossover (V5), a 2.0-liter, seven-seater multipurpose vehicle; Cowin sedan, which is powered by an LPG/gasoline dual-fuel engine; Tiggo, a 1.6-liter sport utility vehicle; and the A5, a 1.6-liter executive sedan.

The QQ3 city car, which is Chery's primary product is set to compete with Chevrolet Spark and the Kia Picanto.

Available in 800-cc or 1.1-liter gasoline engine (paired to either manual or automated manual transmission), QQ3 won the prestigious JD Power Asia Pacific 2004 China Initial Quality Study in the compact car segment and is already being exported to the Middle East and Latin America.

"Indeed, we are very glad that we were able to convince our Chinese partners to bring a number of their vehicle models here. I believe many Filipinos will appreciate the price—especially that of the QQ3—as well as the quality workmanship of these vehicle models," Yupanco said.

He said the company is deeply committed to providing an economical way of transport for Filipinos and will try to convince their buyers that even Chinese vehicles are worth their money.

In fact, Yupanco added that Iseway now has 12 dealerships nationwide and is targetting clients in Visayas and Mindanao.

IF the flood turns out much deeper than expected that the water threatens to "invade" the engine, let your engine "die" to drive another day.

REUTERS

What lies beneath

By Tessa R. Salazar

KEEP YOUR HEAD —AND your car—above water during this season of floods. Your pockets will thank you for it.

Should your rainy day drive be the same as your sunny day drive? Before your tires fall into that open manhole concealed by the flood, you may want to reconsider your driving habits. Your car may not show outright damages at first, but repeated punishment will take its toll on your ride—and your pockets.

• **Half of the tires submerged.** Damage to the underside of your car is likely if half of the car's tires is submerged in water, where it may have also reached the wheel bearings, ball joints, tire rods, and axle boots of the CV joints (for front wheel drive). If there's small tear, and the water enters the axle boot, the CV joints start to rust.

When lubrication is lost

Ferman Lao of SpeedLab on Quezon Avenue explained that all these parts have rubber boots and are lubricated. And as long as these parts are lubricated, they are safe, but with frequent soaking and submerging in water, the lubrication is lost, and this could signal the start of damages.

• **Abandoning the machine.** If the car is abandoned in deep water, you must (that is, if you still have time) disconnect the battery, says Olson Camacho of Project O shop on West Avenue. Camacho is an offroader and a 4x4 specialist.

When the water subsides, don't attempt to start the car, Lao adds. Tow it to the nearest service center for a checkup. If you start the car and the components—particularly the electrical ones—are still wet, then they could burn. That includes your all-important computer box.

When the water subsides, you can also remove the spark plugs and crank the engine to remove the water that has seeped into it (water will come out via the slots of the spark plugs), and then replace your car's fluids: oil, gear oil and transmission. Have the carpet and the interior cleaned, of course.

"Remember: protect your car's electrical components. Once these components get wet, many other parts could get damaged. If you don't bother to check if the computer box is wet (and then you start the engine), it will burn," Lao stressed.

The cost of this neglect? Somewhere in the P40,000 range, depending on what kind of car. European cars' computer boxes can cost more.

• **Let it in, but don't suck it in.** If the flood turns out much deeper than expected that the water threatens to "invade" the engine, wave the white flag of surrender—and let your engine "die" to drive another day.

Then immediately do the advice stipulated in the preceding tip.

"If the engine becomes submerged deep enough to reach the air intake, turn it off. If it takes in water while it's still revving, it hydrolocks and the connecting rod would twist," Lao warns. Lao's Speedlab specializes in suspension, turbocharging, nitrous system, engine diagnostics, modification and tuning.

Camacho says the piston could be punctured, too. He says diesel vehicle owners should be especially wary of water seeping into the air intake.

Camacho adds that if you have to cross a street that has side-view mirror level floods, don't drive the car. Turn off the engine, detach the battery (if you can), then push or tow the vehicle out of the water as fast as you can. Olson stresses that as long as the car is brand-new and the exposure of the engine in the water is brief, then you can still restart the car.

• **Have your brakes checked.** Always have your brakes checked after your car is submerged in water.

Be wary of these

• **Body rust.** If floods reach any part of the car's body that no longer has factory rust-proofing, well, expect rust to make itself comfortable there.

• **The air-conditioning is not waterproof.** One of the first things you should do before braving the floodwaters (aside from steeling your nerves for a few seconds) is to turn off your air-conditioning fans and all. If the water breaches the seal of the car's air con, the unit gets damaged.

• **Pothole torture.** The sound is sickening, the feeling is jarring. Yes, we say "Aray!" when we run over a particularly deep pothole (and there are plenty of these after the floods), but your car may inevitably get the last "Ouch!" Lao explains that the faster the car passes through potholes and speed bumps, the bigger the potential damage to the car. "You don't just ruin the suspension, but all the other parts linked to it," Lao says.

Damaged parts

Your suspension bushings, shocks, tire rod and rack end are just some of the parts that could be damaged. And if you hit the pothole jackpot—say an open manhole—then your expensive mags can get damaged (in street lingo, it is called *bengkong*), as well as suffer a flat tire, too.

The age of the car and the speed in which you attack the pothole plays a major factor in the resulting damage (or non-damage) to the car, Lao says.

• **Just don't drive fast.** Remember that Skyway accident a few months back when an SUV hydroplaned, flew off the ramp and landed on a jeepney on the service road below, killing a passenger? That tragedy happened over a single puddle of water. Now imagine yourself moving at high speeds over an entire flooded street. You don't just receive a lot of irate looks from the pedestrians you drenched, you may also find yourself gliding over to disaster.

• **Avoid the unfamiliar.** During floods, it's best to stick to routes that you know well. Avoid taking shortcuts, especially if the shortcut you're taking is unfamiliar and flooded. Remember, you never know what lies beneath those seemingly calm floodwaters. The almost 3,000 working partsin your car rely on your good judgment.

• **Electrical system advice**: Avoid short circuit. If you really need to submerge your car in the flood, turn off not only all electrical system but also aircon and lights. In case the flood gets in contact with the alternator, there is less chance for short circuit .

Nissan chooses clean diesel

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THREE YEARS AGO, ON March 18, 2004 to be exact, this column reported that Nissan Motor Co. was planning to sell a hybrid vehicle in the United States by 2006 with hybrid technology licensed from Toyota Motor Co. In fact, the hybrid Altima was introduced in the United States only last January, showing how much Nissan lags behind Toyota and Honda, which began selling mass-market hybrid cars in 1997 and 1999, respectively.

But Nissan is catching up and planning to overtake its rivals in environmental performance. On Dec. 11, 2006 in Tokyo, Nissan Chief Operating Officer Toshiyuki Shiga unveiled the Nissan Green Program 2010, a four-year action plan whereby Japan's second largest automaker, in alliance with its partner Renault S.A., would focus on improving technologies for conventional internal-combustion engines in the short term while developing new hybrid, biofuel-based and electric vehicles in the longer term.

Cut

The Nissan Green Program 2010 aims to cut harmful greenhouse emissions by offering a gasoline-electric hybrid vehicle using Nissan's own hybrid system by April 2010, electric vehicles in Japan in the early 2010s and a new hydrogen-powered fuel-cell vehicle in Japan and North America around the same time.

Two weeks ago, an update on the Green Program was given by Simon Sproule, Nissan corporate vice president for global communications, who came to Manila from Tokyo for the 1st Philippine International Motor Show. In a one-on-one interview, Sproule said that Nissan is more bullish on diesel vehicles now since the quality of the fuel is improving and the infrastructure is already everywhere.

What's more, Nissan gets to share the clean diesel technology of Renault. Diesels account for 50 percent of cars and 100 percent of light commercial vehicles in Europe, Sproule pointed out, while in the rest of the world an estimated 10-15 percent of vehicles produced are diesels.

Grow

Although diesels are not popular in the United States and Japan (except for heavy trucks), J.D. Power & Associates projects diesels to grow to about 9 percent of the US market by 2013 from 3.6 percent now. More automakers are turning to common-rail direct-injection diesel engines that are quieter, more powerful, more fuel-efficient and pollute less than diesel engines of the past. But while diesel engines can emit 20 percent less carbon dioxide than gasoline engines, the US Environmental Protection Agency says that soot produced by engines running on high-sulfur diesel fuel creates smog and aggravates asthma and other respiratory problems.

Last Aug. 6, Nissan announced that it will launch in Japan next year a new clean diesel engine for use in the X-Trail, co-developed with Renault and using high-performance catalysts and advanced engine management technologies. In 2010, Nissan plans to start a broader diesel strategy in the United States by launching a diesel Maxima midsize sedan that will comply with emission standards in all 50 states and provide improved fuel economy (up to 30 percent better than the standard gasoline version) and lower carbon dioxide emissions. Nissan will also sell new diesel vehicles in Japan and China by 2010.

Hybrids

But the Nissan Green Program 2010 is not placing all its chips on one number, Sproule said, simply because consumers haven't chosen yet the technology they want. "Hybrids captured the headlines but not the heart of the consumer," he said, noting that Honda has stopped producing the hybrid Accord and the hybrid Insight compact. Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn has been quoted as saying that the fuel savings from hybrids, which cost about $3,000 more than similar gasoline-only vehicles, are not convincing enough for most car buyers. Even then, Nissan is working on a plug-in hybrid.

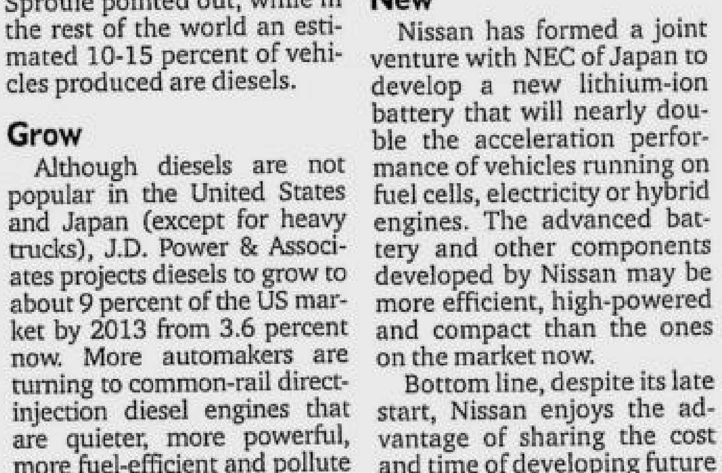
Nissan will undertake the development of all future technologies at the same time, aware that gasoline and diesel engines will remain a main powertrain until 2020. One such project is a 3.0-liter gasoline engine that can run 100 kilometers on three liters of fuel, for which Nissan is targeting 2010 as the release date in Japan.

New

Nissan has formed a joint venture with NEC of Japan to develop a new lithium-ion battery that will nearly double the acceleration performance of vehicles running on fuel cells, electricity or hybrid engines. The advanced battery and other components developed by Nissan may be more efficient, high-powered and compact than the ones on the market now.

Bottom line, despite its late start, Nissan enjoys the advantage of sharing the cost and time of developing future technologies with its partner Renault. Meanwhile, one wonders when the good effects of the Nissan Green Program 2010 will filter down to the Philippines, where new Nissan models usually arrive years after their intro in other Southeast Asian markets.

(With reports from the AP, Reuters, Bloomberg News, IHT and WSJ)



NEXT year, the X-Trail will have a clean diesel engine.

Isuzu shows off diesel supremacy

ISUZU PHILIPPINES CORP. has shown anew its support to the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) by participating in the organization's first ever motor show. The Campi-initiated 1st Philippine International Motor Show was staged on Aug. 9-12 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, and IPC was among the major automotive manufacturers that displayed their vehicles and other products at the event.

Isuzu showed off a total of nine products on their booth, with a CNG-powered N-Series truck shipped directly from Japan serving as the centerpiece. The NPR is a best-selling and highly acclaimed light-duty truck. With CNG (compressed natural gas) propulsion, it just got even better. The NPR CNG, currently only available in Japan, is an ideal example of Isuzu's commitment to developing environment-friendly vehicles using alternative energy sources or hybrid systems to reduce emissions.

CNG-powered engines produce low levels of nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons. They also give off virtually no particulate matter. CNG, whose main constituent gas is methane, is available from reserves of natural gas that exist in many places around the world. Unlike petroleum, much of CNG supply is not concentrated in the Middle East, and its reserves are much larger than those of petroleum.

With the NPR CNG truck, Isuzu reminded motor show visitors that it is not just leading the industry in diesel technology but also in caring for the environment.

Also showcased

Also displayed an Alterra 4x4 A/T. a D-Max 4x2 LS A/T, a D-MAX 4x2 LT M/T, a Crosswind XTi M/T and a Crosswind Sportivo A/T. All of these models are clean and friendly to the environment with the Alterra as Euro-3 compliant while the D-Max and the Crosswind as Euro-2 compliant.

The 2007 Alterra 4x4 A/T has new projector-type headlamps, new chrome six-hole radiator grille, fin inserts, new circular fog lamps and new rear chrome license plate garnish. Inside, the Alterra boasts a new Optitron instrument panel that now displays important data in a manner that does not strain the eyes. The automatic-transmission unit also has an easy-to-read digital gear indicator.

The 2007 D-Max 4x2 LS A/T is now powered by a 3.0-liter 4JJ1 I-TEQ common-rail direct-injection diesel engine with turbo intercooler, producing a maximum output of 146 ps at 3,800 rpm and a maximum torque of 294 Newton-meters at 1,400-3,400 rpm. The D-Max 4x2 LT M/T, meanwhile, still has the 2.5-liter 4JA1-L direct-injection diesel engine under its hood, but shares the new six-hole grille design of the LS.

The Crosswind XTi M/T has a restyled front grille and new-design 15-inch alloy wheels. At the sides, the Crosswind XTi has anti-blind side lens wrapped in retractable chrome housing and with LED turn lights. The XTi's cabin features a high-end Clarion CD/MP3 player with an integrated USB port.

The Crosswind Sportivo A/T, for its part, has a reverse video camera found under its rear spoiler. The video camera sends images to the three-inch LCD monitor of the new JVC entertainment head unit installed on the dashboard. The Sportivo variant now also boasts luxurious leather for its seats.

Other vehicles on display

The other vehicles on display were the Isuzu Passenger Van and the NHR Passenger Van. The NHR-PV is a comfortable vehicle that seats a total of 17 passengers. Its proven 2.8-liter in-line four-cylinder, water-cooled OHV 4JB1 diesel engine produces 79 horsepower and 17.8 kg-m of torque. The NHR-PV is equipped with power steering; semi elliptical alloy-steel leaf springs with hydraulic and telescopic shock absorbers; single-disc in-dash CD player; and anti slip aluminum steps for driver and passenger.

Isuzu also displayed its IPV School Bus Concept with a much-safer front-facing seating arrangement and side entrance. The School Bus can accommodate 12 passengers comfortably, and is powered by the proven Isuzu 4JA1 diesel engine.

Last but not the least, Isuzu displayed its Powertrain engines for automotive, marine and industrial applications—powerful, reliable, fuel-efficient and environment-friendly conforming to the Clean Air Act Law.

For those looking to buy a new vehicle, Isuzu offered the D-Max and the Alterra for actual test drives outside the exhibit hall.

Motorists urged to verify CTPL accreditation of insurance firms

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF INsurance policies were rejected by the Land Transportation Office. These policies were determined to be issued by insurance companies not accredited by the Insurance Commission or mere duplicates of previously issued Certificates of Cover (COCs) for Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL).

BERROYA

LTO Chief Reynaldo Berroya said it was an ill-fated week for insurance companies that were found operating without proper accreditation from the IC and which were not connected to the LTO IT system. Unscrupulous insurance companies now realize that with the LTO's new system for the verification of the COCs for respective CTPL and which is called the COC Verification Facility (COCVF), they can no longer continue with their fraudulent practices where insurance is concerned.

Not accepted

The LTO system did not bog down, the system simply did not accept policies from non-IC-accredited insurance companies or policies which were not uploaded to the LTO system online and real time.

Berroya noted that the main cause of proliferation of fake COCs for the CTPL has been made public with the discovery that most of the insurance agents are not uploading their sales to the authentication facility as claimed before. Insurance agents also deliberately issue duplicate insurance policies to different motor vehicle owners.

LTO rejects thousands of COCs issued by nonaccredited insurance firms

Rejected

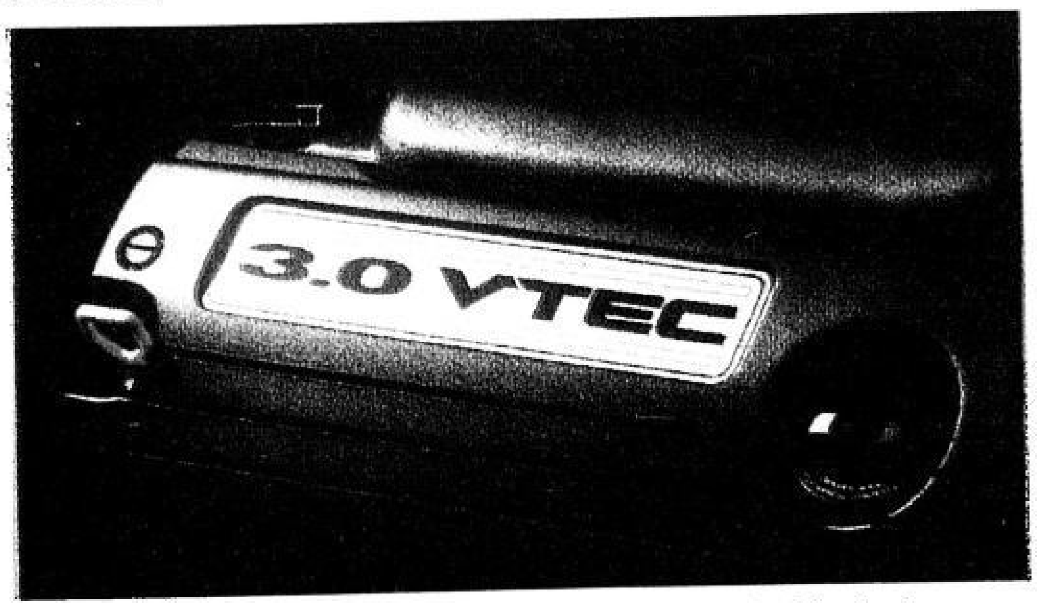
The LTO chief also added that the rejection of the thousands of policies by the LTO system this past week only proves that the COCVF is a very effective measure in ensuring that only COCs issued by IC-accredited insurance companies connected to the LTO IT system will be accepted and processed by the LTO.

Berroya further appealed to motorists who are having their vehicles registered to verify first with the LTO if the insurance company of choice is accredited by the IC and if the company is also hooked up with the LTO real time and online. This way, unnecessary inconveniences with regards to a speedy registration process would be avoided.

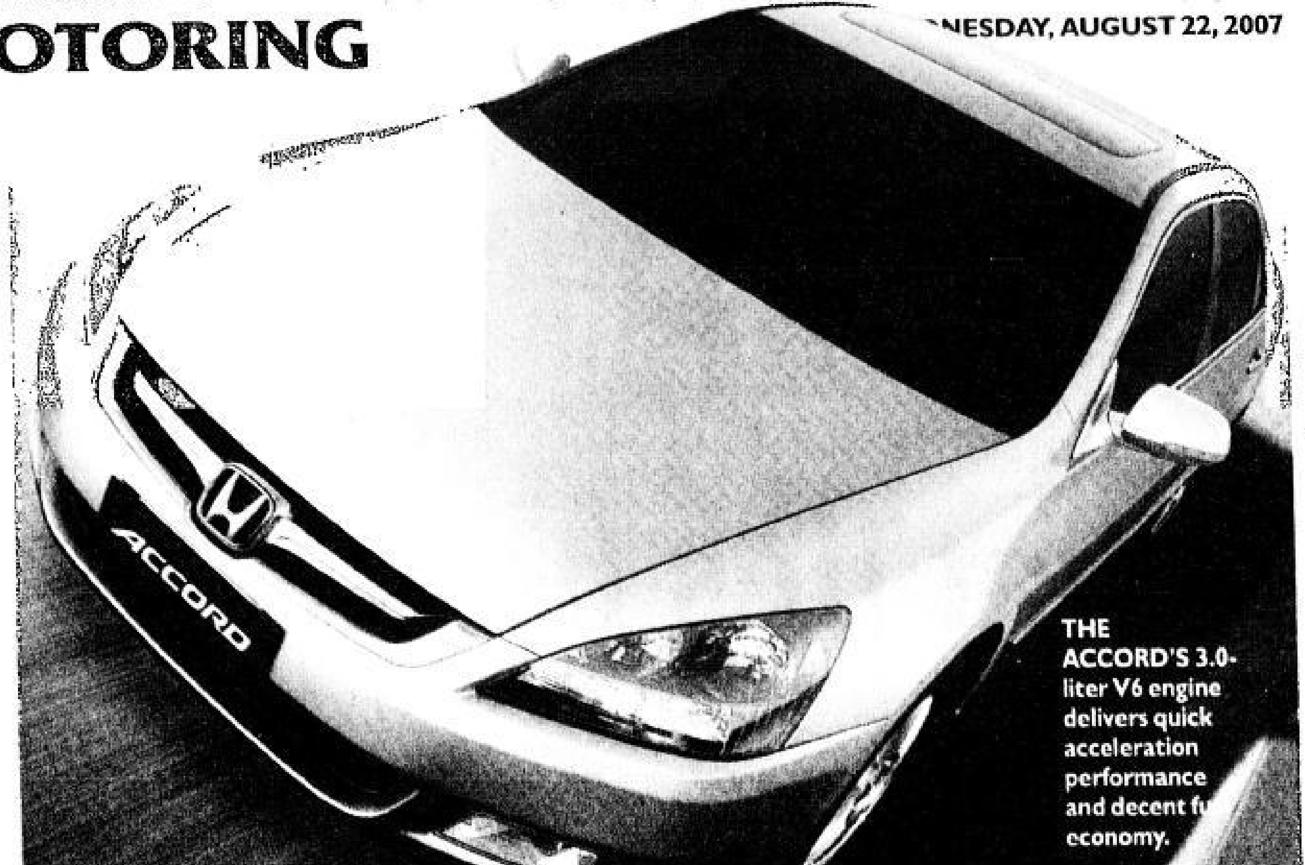
Reform insurance industry

Berroya has been instrumental in what is considered to be a milestone in the plan to reform the CTPL insurance industry. He said the transition period of implementing the new system is not an easy task, especially now that insurance organizations with dubious intent are finding ways to pressure the government to repeal DOTC D.O. 2007-28 and return to the old system.

Berroya firmly believes that the COCVF supports the government's drive in protecting the motoring public and promoting fair practices in the insurance industry and at the same time recover P250 million in lost taxes yearly.



THE 3.0-LITER V6 Accord may be conservatively designed but with its right mix of power, excellent steering feel and overall handling, this car is near perfect.



THE ACCORD'S 3.0-liter V6 engine delivers quick acceleration performance and decent f economy.

Accord
a confidence-building car

By Charles E. Buban

THE 2007 HONDA Accord may look a bit conservative when placed side by side its smaller cousin, the Civic (that boasts an inspired design and a sporty profile).

But what it may lack in flair, the Accord makes up by what it can do on the road.

Armed with a 3-liter, 238 horsepower, V6 engine (a 2.4-liter, 168 horsepower engine is also available), the 2007 Accord makes a perfect choice, especially if you're going out of town.

Case in point: the country's provincial highways are basically two-lane roads that promise to test any driver's overtaking skills.

Since considerable sections of these highways are filled with cargo trucks, tricycles, and of course "kuligligs" (two-wheeled trailers pulled by a hand tractor) that drive in convoys, albeit at a turtle's pace, miss one overtaking opportunity and you will likely end up lagging behind one of these slowpokes, further delaying your driving timetable.

Fast and agile response

Now, what you need is a vehicle that ensures a fast and agile response when you step on the accelerator. Fortunately, this writer was driving a 3.0 V6 Accord in going to Pangasinan a couple of weeks ago.

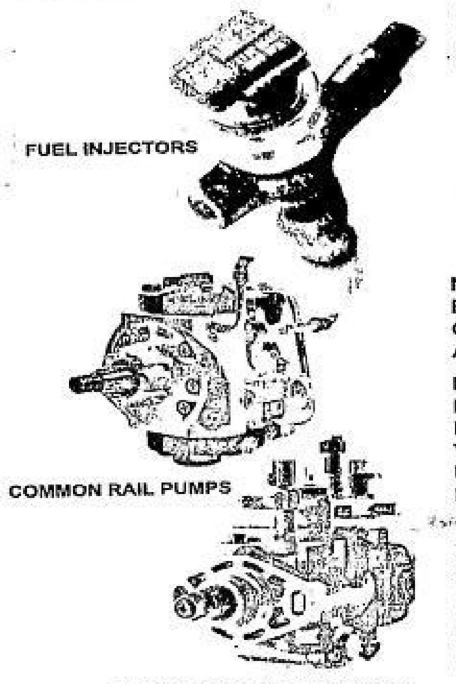
The Accord did not disappoint: even at standstill this car could bring its over 1,500-kg body weight to 100 kph in just 7 seconds.

Also worth taking notice of is the car's safety innovations. The Accord has speed sensor at each wheel that sends signals to the antilock braking system (ABS) control unit, which in turn independently modulates the brake fluid pressure to each front wheel and the rear wheels in tandem.

This system enhances the driver's ability to maintain steering control during hard stops on all types of surfaces.

While the ABS function is particularly effective on surfaces in which the wheels on one side of the vehicle have significantly less traction than those on the other side, the electronic brake assist ensures responsive braking whenever the driver needs it while the vehicle stability assist controls the vehicle even when the steering wheel is abruptly turned.

Now, while these safety innovations work for a split second and are barely noticeable, the result is an exhilarating, confidence-building drive (considering this writer seldom overtakes cars, much more a convoy of trucks).



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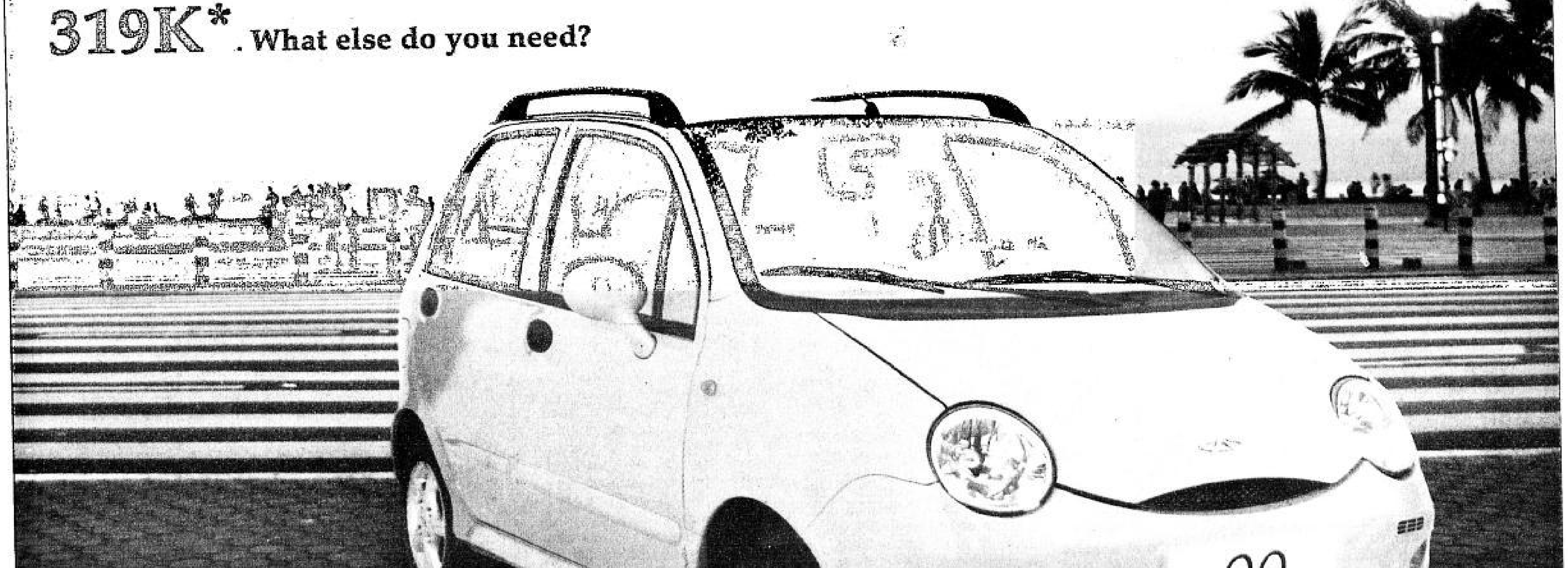

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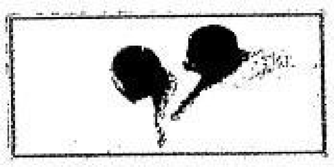
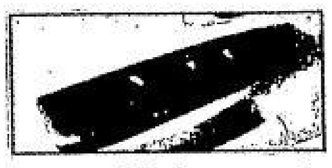
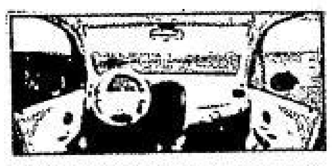

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Illac Diaz wins the first DHL Young Entrepreneurs for Sustainability Awards for his Pier One Seaman's Dormitory project

Yes to change

Text and photos by Bianca Consunji
2bU! Correspondent

"I WANT TO MAKE A scratch on humanity," said Illac Diaz, winner of the first DHL Young Entrepreneurs for Sustainability (YES) Awards. "By following my dream, I was able to make money and help people at the same time. This, for me, is a perfect job."

Diaz, one of the three finalists of the YES Awards, won the top prize for his project, the Pier One Seaman's Dormitory. The dormitory

YES/ C3

Christine Jacob's Life Diet

Fuel for the Body

The way we eat plays an important role on how we lead our lives. The food and drinks that we consume serve as fuel for our body and soul that make us fulfill our daily activities as we make the most out of life.

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Creating this balance lets us enjoy the food and drinks that we love. It lets us have some carbs, some protein, some greens, some fruits, and room for our most-loved softdrinks.

TV Personality, swimmer, and mom Christine Jacob defines a balanced diet by saying: "having a balanced diet means that there is space for all food and drinks, depending on what I do. It is attuning what I eat with my lifestyle". She believes that maintaining a balanced diet can be achieved by simply enjoying what you eat or drink, because in doing so, you end up feeling better and happier about yourself.

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So celebrate wellness and happiness by including your favorite Coca-Cola softdrink in your balanced diet, The Coca-Cola Company encourages you to have a life enjoying the things that make you happy.

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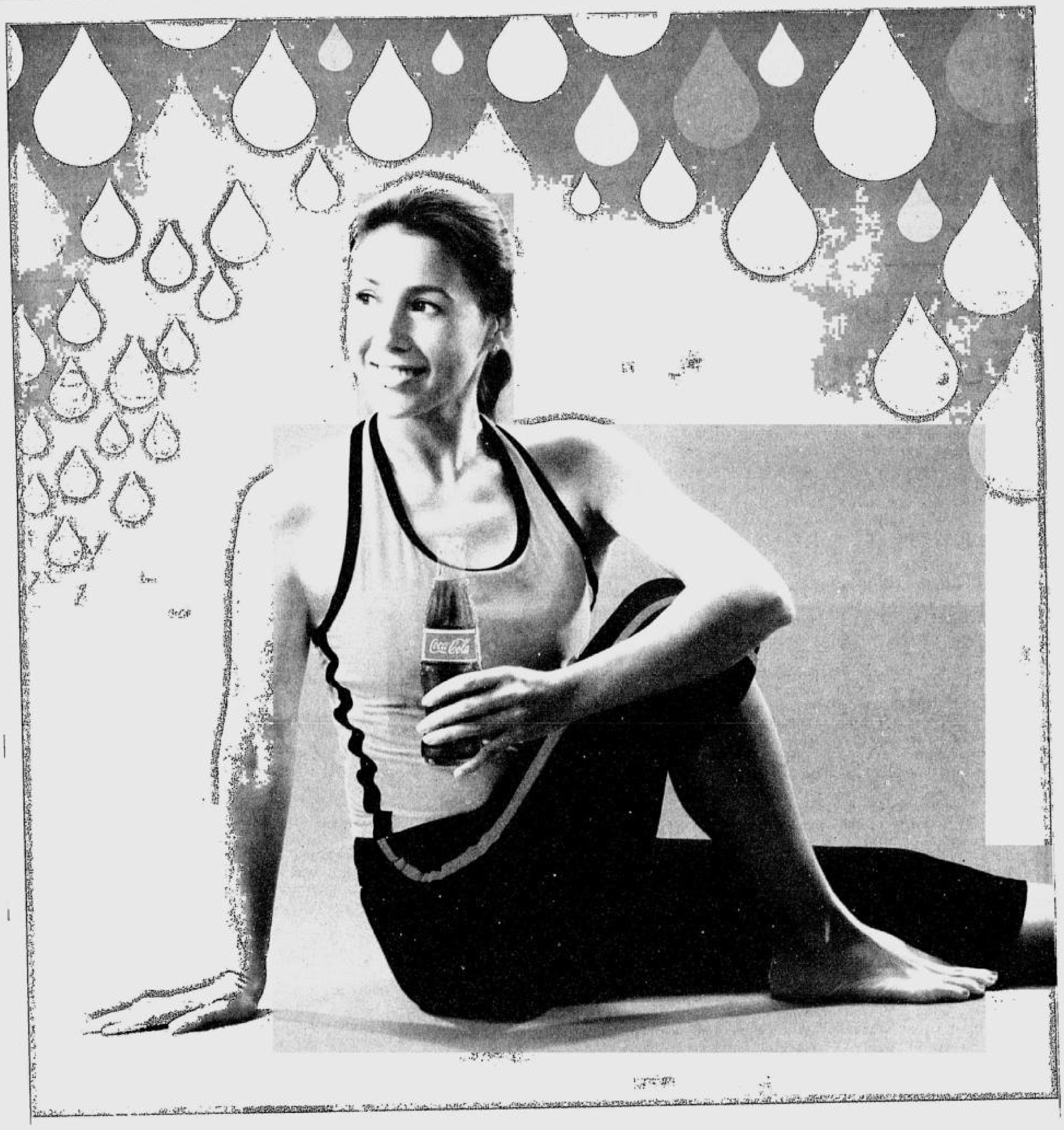
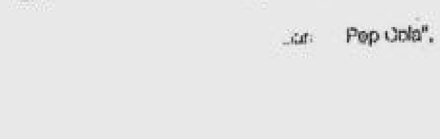


"HAPPINESS IS ALL ABOUT BALANCE.
I balance work and motherhood,
time for family and time for me.
I also balance my intake everyday.
There's a place for all food and drinks,
in a balanced diet.
Including the drinks that make me happy! "

Christine Jacob
TV Personality, Champion Swimmer, Yogi and Full-Time Mom

A balanced life is a Sparkling Life.



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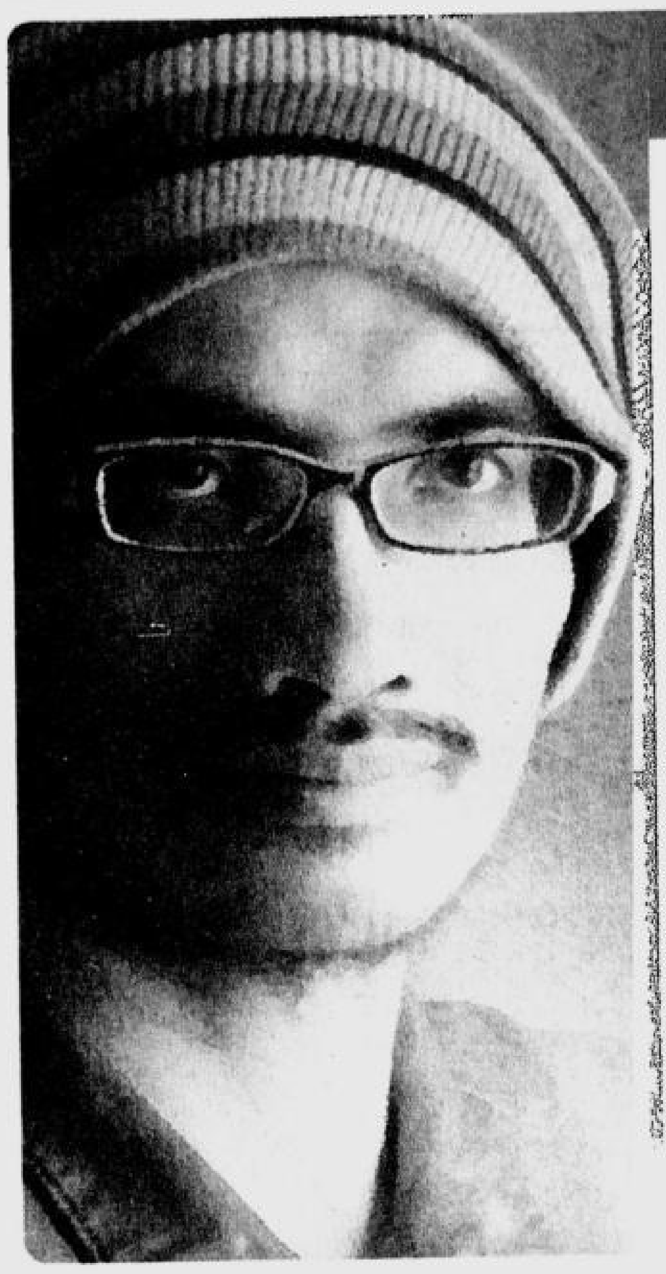


CARMELO Juinio

Award-winning science fiction, Pinoy-style

Carmelo Juinio's 'Laminated Woman' grabs a slot in the first-ever Animax Awards

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

YOUTH CHANNEL ANIMAX RECENTLY unveiled the winners of the Animax Awards, the channel's inaugural Pan-Asia animation scriptwriting competition. One of the winners is a Filipino!

The winning entry from the Philippines, called "Laminated Woman," is by Carmelo Juinio. Its story is set in a harsh desert planet where the inhabitants have perfected Lamination—a system of imprisonment without walls which ensures that prisoners remain productive members of society. The system has made both jails and the death penalty unnecessary.

Juinio's story is also about Dr. John "Jack" Griswold, who works so he can forget about a personal tragedy. Jack doesn't have any desire to get involved with the planet's curious politics, but everything changes when he meets a "Lamb" or a laminated person.

"Aside from that nudge in the right direction [from the contest], the inspiration came from various sources," says Juinio of his story's beginnings. "The science-fiction notion of having people laminated was inspired mainly by Darth Vader, "The Man in the Iron Mask," the homunculi of "Fullmetal Alchemist," an episode of "Dexter's Laboratory" where Dexter literally laminated himself (like an ID), memories of an old '80s or '90s video, "Simply Irresistible" and "Blade Runner."

The story theme, on the other hand (summarized by the tagline "Sometimes you don't need words"), was inspired by the writer's own difficulty in talking to people and his aversion to cell phones.

"I personally don't own a cell phone," says Juinio.

Writing the entry took Juinio a little under a month, although the idea was something that had been floating in his head for several years.

"A love story between people who have trouble communicating," is how he puts it. "The story was to have been part of a much larger cycle, a novel about Laminated People, which I had been too lazy or too terrified to write down. Seeing the impossibility of developing a totally brand new idea within the contest period, I reduced the laminated people to a single laminated woman."

Grand finals

Juinio, along with four other entries (South East Asia/Malaysia's "Guardian Invader" by Alvin Lim, India's "Scarlet Samurai" by Aravind K. Prakash, Hong Kong's "Serial Burglary" by Kong Khong Chang, and Taiwan's "The Final Dream Match" by Yu Dong Bing), won US$2,000 for his efforts. These five entries will move on to the grand finals in Tokyo, Japan, in September 2007.

They will compete against the single Korean and six Japanese winners that came from the respective Korean and Japanese versions of the competition. Not only will the grand prize winner win a cash prize of two million yen, the winning script will also be animated by a top Japanese animation studio, A-1 Pictures of Aniplex, and eventually broadcast across Asia on Animax.

Animax is also giving viewers the chance to support their favorite entry among the 12 finalists through a web poll launched last Aug. 7. The synopses of the 12 entries will be posted online at www.animaxawards.com and viewers will have until Sept. 1 to vote for their favorite script.

Visit www.animaxawards.com for more info and win one of 50 Animax prize packs up for grabs (each containing a Gundam figurine and Animax goodies) just by voting for your favorite entry in the Web Poll!

Juinio says that if his entry wins, "It could represent a step forward, no matter how small, toward promoting science fiction in a country better known for fantasies about mythical monsters that go bump in the night."

E-mail the author at ninomarksablan@yahoo.com

TALES OF THE CITY

Tour guide reveals Manila's best-kept secrets

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

CARLOS CELDRAN IS probably best known as that witty tour guide in *barong* Tagalog, *tsinelas* and *salakot*. He is regarded by many as an expert when it comes to the best historic destinations, most interesting hangouts and most fulfilling eateries in the country. And while he must have already suggested the following best-kept city secrets to several customers, it is now time for 2bU! readers to be filled in on refreshing new places and activities.

Best way to spend a Sunday afternoon: At the National Museum of the Philippines (The Museum of the Filipino People), located at Agrifina Circle in Luneta Park

"It is definitely not the crappy cobwebbed hall of taxidermied tarsiers that one remembers from grade school field trips of yore," Carlos says about the refurbished museum.

The refurbishing had been done by JT Mañosa and Associates and Lor Calma & Associates with assistance from the Canada-based Lord Cultural Resources Planning Management. It is a sparkling clean, well-run and well-curated institution. Major plus is the airconditioning, which truly makes culture appreciation even more enjoyable.

Carlos also suggests taking a walk through Luneta Park up to the Quirino Grandstand for a drink while gazing at the sunset at Golden Horizon Restaurant.

Best little hostel and hoedown: Wine Hour at Friendly's Guest House (http://www.friendlysguesthouse.com; (917)3331418; benjie@friendlysguesthouse.com)

According to Carlos, what makes Benjie Garcia's Friendly's Guest House a great destination, apart from having the most reasonably priced accommodations in downtown Manila, is its weekend Wine Hour. It is thrown every early Saturday evening by Benjie himself, complete with wine and the best conversations from a hodgepodge of individuals composed of backpackers, foreign NGO volunteers, journalists, American Peace Corps on leave and artsy locals.

"A great place to warm up your party pants before walking out to enjoy the Malate night downstairs," says Carlos. "The perfect address for anyone who wants to be in the heart of downtown without breaking the bank."

CARLOS Celdran

Accommodations start at P300 a night and P800 for one day, with private aircon and bath. It also has free Wi-Fi, which is a great plus.

Best way to spend an artsy afternoon in Pasay: At the Galerie Duemila (210 Loring Street, 1300 Pasay City; 8319990/8339815; http://www.galleriaduemila.com) and Albert Avellana Art Gallery (House A-19, 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City; 8338357)

For the culture vulture, nothings beats the National Museum, Duemila and Avellana galleries, and Solidaridad bookshop

"Located only blocks away from one another, these two galleries have definitely upped the class and culture quotient of an area more known for its unopened airports, crumbling infrastructure and squatter colonies," Carlos says. "Both are located inside charming mid-20th century Manila houses, both have an extensive list of amazing local—and sometimes foreign—artists, and both are a destination in itself. Just juggling between these two places can fill up an entire afternoon."

For a full-on artsy afternoon, one can then head to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cultural Center of the Philippines, the GSIS Museum, and, while you're in the area, the Coconut Palace.

Best bookstores: The Filipino Bookstore by Bookmark (264-A Pablo Ocampo Sr. Ave., Makati City, between Metropolitan Ave. and Zobel Roxas; 8958061 to 65), Solidaridad (531 Padre Faura, Ermita, Manila) and Tradewinds (3/F of the Silahis Handicraft Building, Gen. Luna Street, Intramuros, beside Victoria Street)

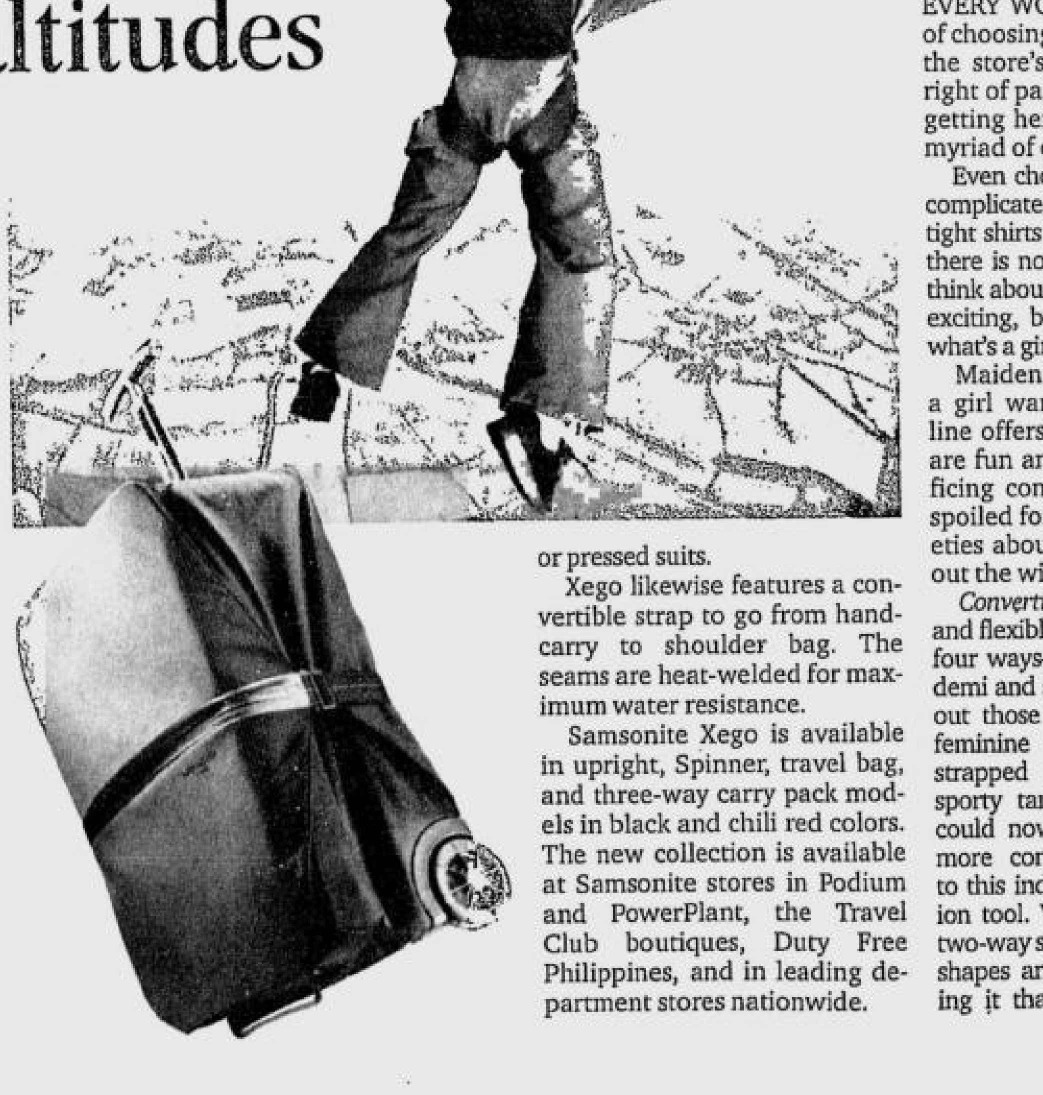
Carlos suggests going to The Filipino Bookstore for all publications Filipino, from photo albums of Old Manila and Corregidor to biographies of historical icons like Imelda Marcos and Jose Rizal, from children's books and postcards to cookbooks and other limited edition publications. "Best part of it all is that they are always on sale," Carlos says. "Either that or it's so cheap that it feels like it."

Another bookstore Carlos likes is Solidaridad (owned and operated by National Artist for Literature F. Sionil Jose) because of its hard-to-find books. It specializes in Filipiniana, Filipino/International Fiction, Poetry, subjects like Philosophy, Sociology and Political Theory. It has back issues of the New Yorker. "It is really an oasis of intelligence and gentility in this fast-declining neighborhood," Carlos says. "And as one of the last street level mom-and-pop establishments on the Padre Faura/Adriatico Street area, it is imperative that you rush out now and support this little treasure trove of culture and heritage despite the rather steep costs of some of their books."

There is also Tradewinds Bookstore which according to Carlos specializes in old Philippine magazines, Philippine fiction and books on Philippine culture. Just like in The Filipino Bookstore, the prices here are very reasonable. "The Silahis Handicraft emporium and Galeria de las Islas Gallery beside Tradewinds are also worth a browse."

Best Japanese Moment: Ebisu Restaurant (Ma. Daniel Building, 470 San Andres St. corner MH del Pilar St. Malate, Manila; 5218714).

High-tech at high altitudes



MADE OF THE SAME STRONG material that ensures a sky diver's safe landing, Samsonite's new Xego collection invokes a spirit of hardy, intrepid adventure.

Samsonite's product developers looked to the sky for inspiration and saw parachutes as the basis for Xego's lightweight but resilient design. This line of luggage can be counted on to expand its capabilities easily and conveniently, whenever travelers need it.

With durable nylon-polyester mounted on a collapsible spring steel frame, Xego readily transforms to adapt to various carry-on and overhead compartment regulations, without cross-straps compressing precious luggage. There are also markers on the external webbing to indicate the bag's current width.

The monotube wheel handle comes with a smart bungee cord so extra bags placed on top of Xego will remain steady. The cord's hook near the handle can also be used to hang smaller bags or pressed suits.

Xego likewise features a convertible strap to go from hand-carry to shoulder bag. The seams are heat-welded for maximum water resistance.

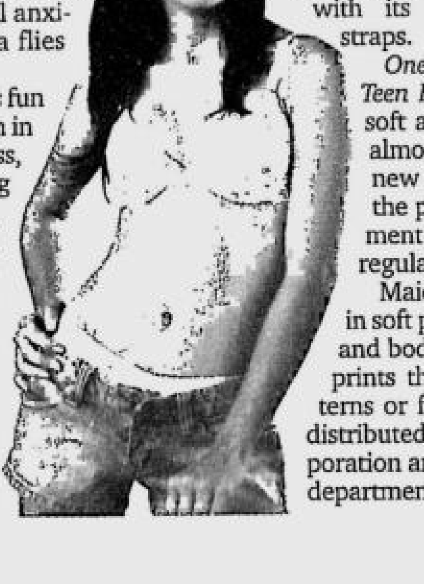
Samsonite Xego is available in upright, Spinner, travel bag, and three-way carry pack models in black and chili red colors. The new collection is available at Samsonite stores in Podium and PowerPlant, the Travel Club boutiques, Duty Free Philippines, and in leading department stores nationwide.

From girl to woman

EVERY WOMAN HAS A SWEET MEMORY of choosing her first bra. That special trip to the store's lingerie section marks a girl's right of passage into adulthood, along with getting her first period and experiencing a myriad of changes in her body.

Even choosing clothes is now a little more complicated. Unlike before when blouses and tight shirts could be worn without a thought, there is now breast support and coverage to think about. Turning into a woman is fun and exciting, but sometimes a little scary. So what's a girl to do?

Maidenform knows exactly what a girl wants and needs. Its teen line offers a variety of styles that are fun and pretty without sacrificing comfort. Girls are indeed spoiled for a choice and all anxieties about choosing a bra flies out the window.



Convertible Teen Bra. This fun and flexible bra can be worn in four ways—halter, crisscross, demi and strapless. So bring out those flirty tube tops, feminine spaghetti strapped blouses and sporty tank shirts, which could now be worn with more confidence, thanks to this indispensable fashion tool. What's more, its two-way stretch foam cups shapes and smooths, giving it that seamless look which is perfect for tight baby tees.

One Fabulous Fit Underwire Teen Bra. The brand's best selling ladies' line is now available for teens. It features two-way stretch foam cups and an underwire for maximum support. Wearing underwire bras takes some getting used to, but once girls get the hang of it, they'll never go without it. It offers maximum support and enhances one's posture, plus it creates a nice silhouette for light and thin fabrics.

One Fabulous Fit Molded Teen Bra. This razorback teen bra features soft cups and a plastic front closure, which is perfect for button-down shirts and blouses. Caught in the morning rush while preparing for school? This bra is hassle- and struggle-free. It's comfy too with its stretchy and adjustable straps.

One Fabulous Fit Stretch Foam Teen Bra. This underwire bra is soft and comfortable that a girl almost forgets she's wearing this new contraption called bra. It's the perfect transition undergarment from a girlie camisole to a regular bra.

Maidenform for Girls is offered in soft pastels as well as basic black and body beige, in solid colors and prints that range from dainty patterns or fun stripes. It is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and is available in all leading department stores nationwide.

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Let the games begin.

Yes to change

From page C1

business was the result of his thesis at the Asian Institute of Management. It provides seafarers with transient housing, part-time jobs and seminars on safe sex and STD prevention.

"A lot of OFWs in the port area subsist on P50 a day," Diaz noted. "And when they're out of work, they resort to putting up temporary shanties while they job-hunt. Instead of letting them do this, we put up clean dormitories for them to stay in."

He added, "We also put them up in one area and grouped them by profession, so it would be easier for the agencies to find them and give them work."

Diaz's business bested two other nominees for the prize. The other finalists were Dexter Briones, president of Power Memory Franchising Incorporated, which provides supplementary educational programs to low-performance public schools; and Emerson Atanacio, who created the Dual Training System Modality program offered to less privileged families and out-of-school-youth.

Briones, whose program primarily targets indigent children, said, "We aim to build confidence in people's lives by teaching them practical memory training techniques to help them process information."

Atanacio, on the other hand, partnered with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) in order to help out-of-school-youth resume their education.

According to DHL country manager Larry Llamzon, the company wanted to promote social responsibility through three ways: one, by helping manage disasters; two, by supporting future generations with various projects, and lastly, by creating markets for social change. Llamzon cited DHL's partnership with Gawad Kalinga as one of the company's key projects.

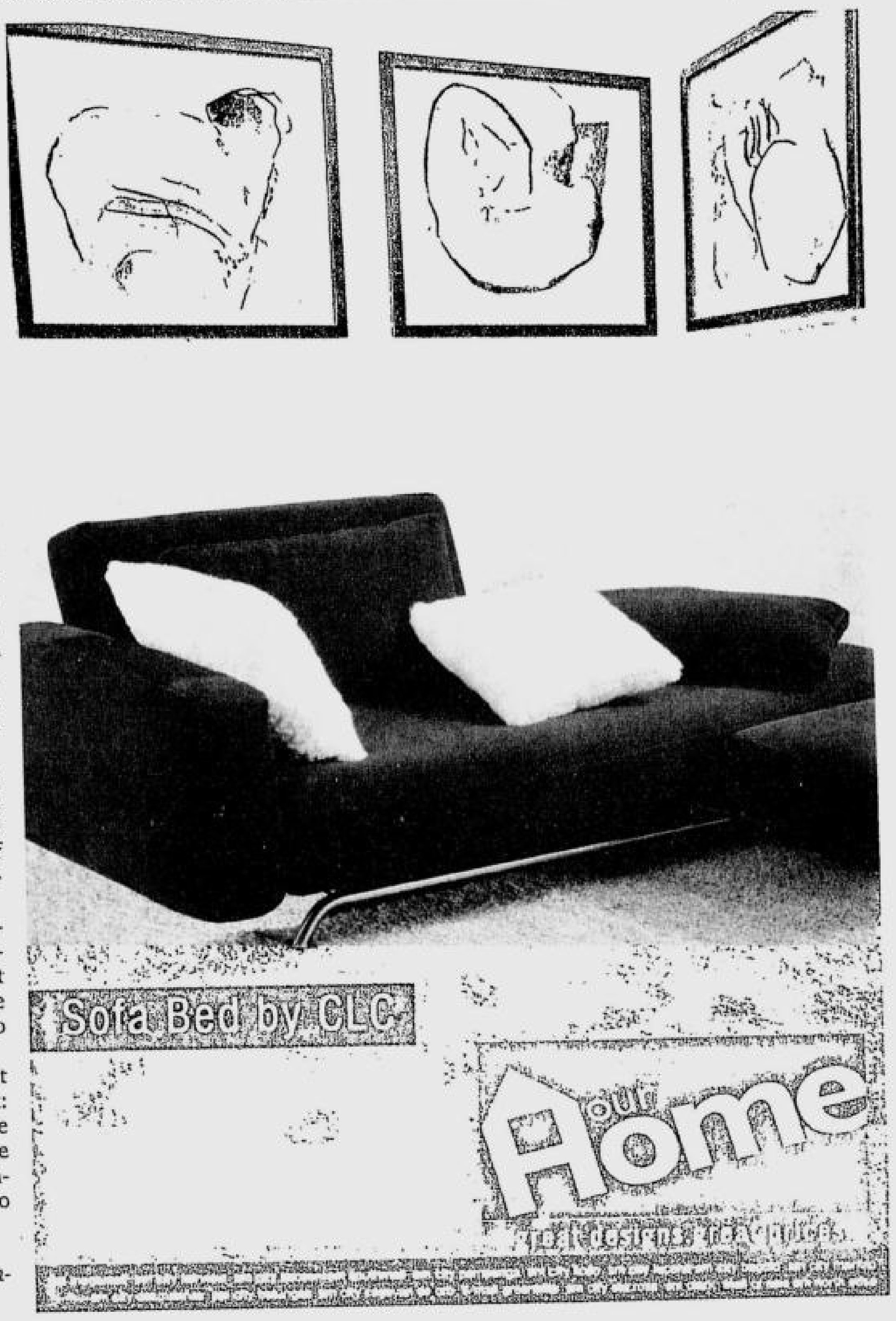
It was for those reasons that Diaz was able to win the top prize, which included a chance to represent the Philippines in the regional arm of the competition to be held in Singapore.

"I want to leave behind a community that is self-sufficient and empowered," Diaz said. "If the present system is not working [to eradicate poverty], then maybe it's time to find a new way."

He added, "Nowadays, our most important resource is being left out: the young people who want to make a change. Young people can change the world. Sometimes, establishments don't work. It's up to us to find a way to do what we want."

E-mail the author at biancaconsunji@yahoo.com

FINALISTS receiving framed photos of themselves at work



The little jeep . . .

From page C4

Though Solarco has a limited production of 10 units per month, there are already several cities that have ordered 50 units or more.

Keeping people aware

"We have no intention of phasing out anybody in this business," said Puckett. "This is just to keep people aware and open their minds that there are alternative engines—we're not talking about bodies but engines—in the market that can clean the environment … so that people will come up with ideas to convert their diesel engines to electric engines, and maybe they can use lighter materials instead of heavy-gauge steel. They can use fiberglass.

"There's really no difference between this and the usual jeepneys. All you have to do is change the motor, put batteries in them."

Solarco designs the jeepneys and then has them manufactured in China for economical reasons. But if jeepney manufacturers are inspired by Solarco, and local governments support the new jeepney, then the jeepneys may be produced here, contribute more to the local economy and improve competition. Prices will decrease, employment will increase, technology will improve and people can all breathe again. There's so much more to the Electric Jeepney than just clean air.

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The little jeep that could

The environment-friendly Electric Jeepney may yet become the new king of the road

TRY STANDING AT THE CORner of Gil Puyat and Makati Avenue during rush hour and just observe. Thousands of commuters from all sides of the intersection go through the same toxic routine every single day. Aside from the traffic that everyone has to contend with, there is also the noise from car horns, cranky diesel engines and fumes, more apparent to jeepney passengers and drivers who do not have the luxury of airconditioning. Packed like sardines in rickety reconditioned steel containers, they stop and go, stop and go, stop and go until they finally reach their destination late, sweaty and covered in soot.

It's a cardiac-arresting cocktail of high-stress, low-pay and minimum-productivity exertions.

Now imagine the jeepney as a purely electric machine that belches nothing, makes no noise, has a high headroom, comfortable seating and large windows. You may even pass the mike around and enjoy sing-alongs while on your way to work. And you're not cramped because, though the maximum seating is up to six on either side, the driver regulates it to a comfortable five.

The P7 you pay him goes a long way because he's not filling up his tank every two hours with ridiculously expensive fuel he can hardly afford. He also works less hours, gets a larger take-home pay, is in much better spirits and will live longer from the clean air he breathes.

Sounds like a silly dream? Not anymore. With the help of three headstrong environmentally conscious organizations and a pioneering mayor, the scenario has been made possible. Welcome the Electric Jeepney!

The new jeepney will have its inaugural run in Makati. Solar Electric Co. (Solarco), Greenpeace and Green Renewable Independent Power Producer (Gripp) are all partners in the Climate Friendly Cities Project, and Mayor Jejomar Binay is their first and very enthusiastic customer.

Solarco, headed by Panch Puckett, designed the E-Jeepney to be fully electricity-driven, noiseless, light, sturdy, efficient and economical.

"It's very easy to drive," said Puckett. "Because it's lighter, the jeepney drivers who are so used to the heavy diesel engines will feel a little weird at first, but it only takes a short while to get used to it."

Considering it has no gas tank (just a battery compartment) the E-Jeepney runs purely on stored electricity, resulting in a much quieter and fumeless trip. "Diesel-powered jeepneys actually waste more fuel while idling," Puckett said. "In the case of the Electric Jeepney, when the driver steps on the brake, the engine really stops. It doesn't idle."

Smoother ride

Without factoring in the driver's skills, discipline and temperament, the E-Jeepney results in a much smoother ride with its automatic transmission.

"It's a glorified golf cart," said Puckett. "Have you ridden a golf cart before? It's nice!"

Panch Puckett is an idealist. He has been in the business of renewable energy for three decades now, having started when nobody believed it was feasible. He believes in renewable energy. Now that the world is aware of global warming's adverse effects on the environment, he beams with pride at the fact that he has been right to advocate pollutant-free, renewable energy all along.

"I've travelled all over so I know what's going on. I've seen all the pollution—China, United States, Asian countries ... lots of Asian countries. It's scary, especially in our case here."

The Electric Jeepney is nothing new. The technology has been around for decades, as can be seen in China and around the Asean. Nepal uses electric vehicles in their cities. Bangkok has electric "tuk-tuks." There have been several attempts by other companies to sell the technology to jeepney operators, but they were either too expensive or the manufacturers were unable to provide warranties and service.

The Solarco E-Jeepneys will have a suggested retail price of P550,000 with a one-year warranty on the engine and a two-year guarantee on the battery. There is an option for a solar-paneled roof that will help recharge the battery; it costs an additional P150,000. Solarco will service the units and provide spare parts and accessories.

"This venture will not succeed without the service aspect," Puckett said. "We are here for the long-term sustainability of the project so we will provide the necessary services."

The E-Jeepney can run 120 kilometers on a single charge. If the driver travels at an average speed of 40 km/h nonstop, that translates to a three-hour working day. But the stops can extend his hours because the battery is not used up—it doesn't idle. The E-Jeepneys can be parked for eight hours in Solarco's centrally located charging stations for a mere P150 per charge.

At the moment, there are 400,000 conventional jeepneys around the Metro.

THE LITTLE/ C3

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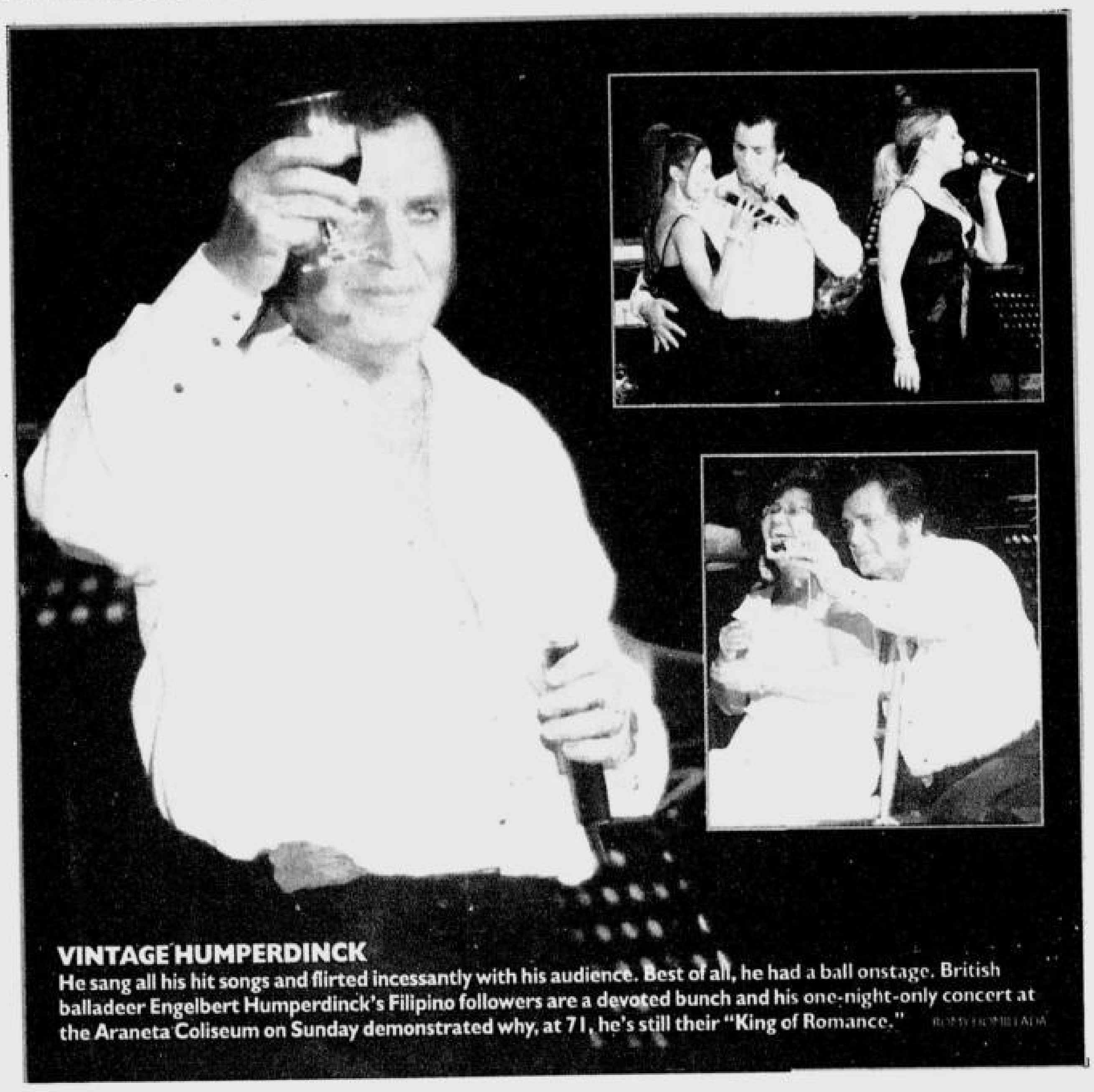


VINTAGE HUMPERDINCK
He sang all his hit songs and flirted incessantly with his audience. Best of all, he had a ball onstage. British balladeer Engelbert Humperdinck's Filipino followers are a devoted bunch and his one-night-only concert at the Araneta Coliseum on Sunday demonstrated why, at 71, he's still their "King of Romance." ROMY HOMILLADA

Study breaks it down: How to make hit films

NEW YORK—WHAT MAKES movie magic? A psychology professor has done a statistical study to determine what makes critical darlings or box-office hits.

Films that earn awards and praise from reviewers tend to be R-rated and based on a true story or a prize-winning play or novel, says psychology professor Dean Simonton at the University of California, Davis.

Big-budget blockbusters—comedies, musical, sequels or remakes—do not ordinarily draw acclaim, Simonton found. Neither do summer releases, PG-13 movies, movies that open on thousands of screens or ones that have enormous box office numbers in their first weekend.

Very different

"I had hoped that there was a difference between blockbusters and films that can be considered great cinematic creations," said Simonton, who presented his findings last week at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association in San Francisco. "It was gratifying to find out they're very, very different."

Simonton says he is not a movie buff—"I'm a consumer like everyone else"—but in his longtime studies of genius, creativity and leadership, he started compiling data about the collaborative process of filmmaking in 1999.

"Brokeback Mountain" is a prime example of what Simonton discovered. It was rated R, had an 87 percent approval rating on the Metacritic.com website and it came out at the height of prestige-picture time in December 2005. It had a top-notch creative team, including director Ang Lee and screenwriters Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, working from a short story by Pulitzer Prize winner Annie Proulx. The film cost $14 million to make and grossed nearly $175 million worldwide. Nominated for eight Oscars, it won three.

Exceptions

There are exceptions, like this summer's "Knocked Up." It is very much an R-rated movie, but it is a comedy that's gotten 85 percent positive reviews on Metacritic and it came out in June. Judd Apatow, who enjoys a cult following, wrote and directed it. The film cost an estimated $33 million and so far has grossed $164 million worldwide. It is probably not going to win any Oscars, but who knows?

"All these things are just statistical relationships—there are always exceptions to every finding you have," Simonton said. "You'll have a film that really shouldn't have success but they have something quirky going for them."

He added: "As a consequence, Hollywood falls back on sequels and remakes. Even though you've seen them before, you know earlier versions have succeeded."

Stephen Whitty, chairman of the New York Film Critics Circle, pointed out one of the rare recent times that his group and the Academy Awards have matched up: "The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King," a big-budget sequel and a huge box-office hit.

Often, the group prides itself on singling out films that are not obvious Oscar bait, like "Mulholland Dr." and "Far From Heaven."

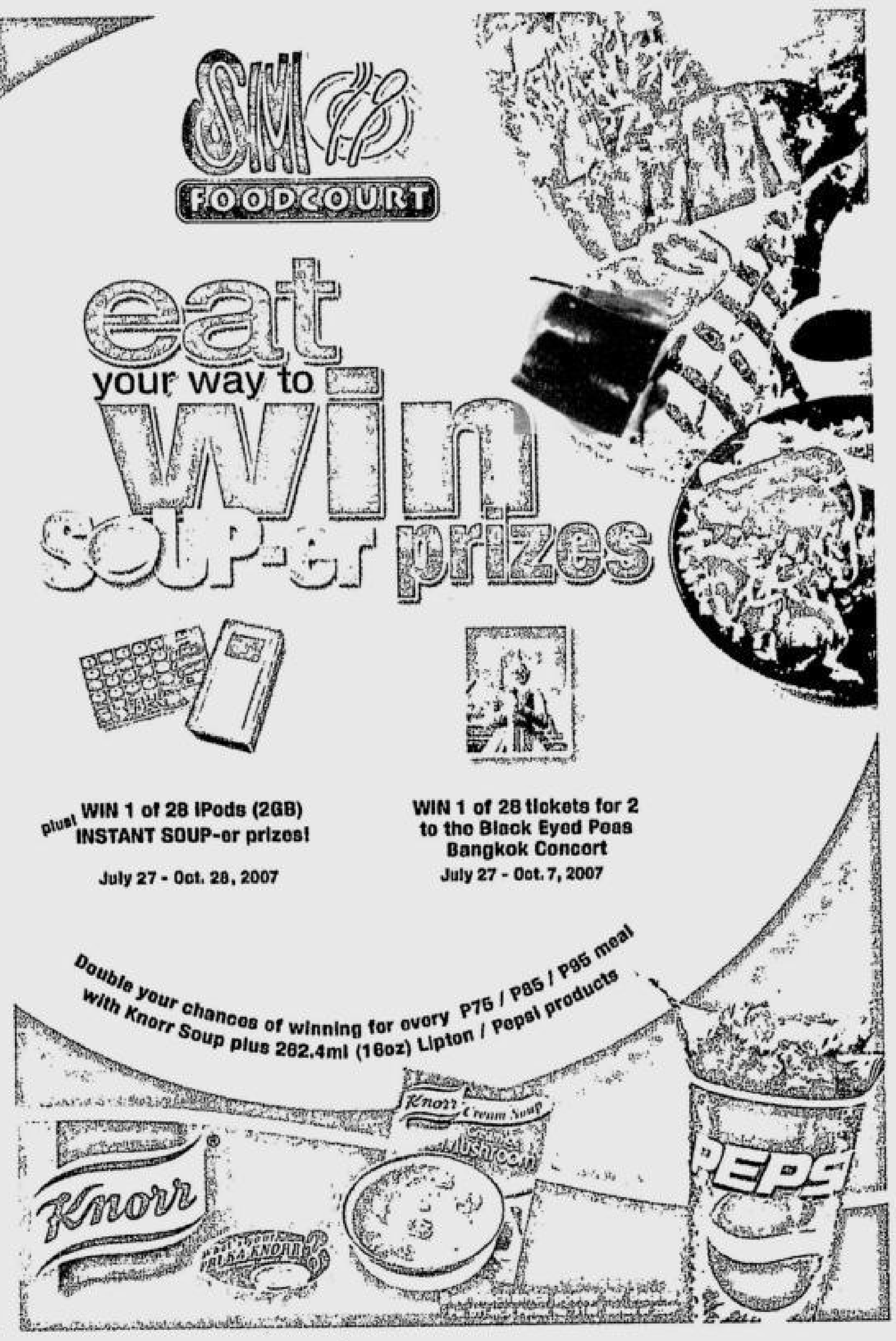
Grouches

As awards expert Tom O'Neil has long suspected: "Critics are supposed to be guiding American moviegoers. This study proves they're taking their own esoteric side trip."

"Critics are academic types who want to prove how smart they are … professional grouches who think a critic's job is to be critical," said O'Neil, columnist for theenvelope.com website. "Unfortunately, great critics tend to be social misfits [who] bash sentimental movies because they remind them of a loving, nurturing world to which they do not belong."

A great example of this, he said, came in 2002. The Oscar Best Picture was Ron Howard's "A Beautiful Mind" (based on a prize-winning book about a true story) but several critics' groups gave their top honors to David Lynch's dreamlike "Mulholland Drive."

"Even though," O'Neil pointed out, "David Lynch said he had no idea what it was about." *AP*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2 A LOVE STORY
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Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
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2 OUIJA
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8 OUIJA
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10 RISE

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3 RESERVED
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3 CASA
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3 SURFS UP

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1 A LOVE STORY
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3 SALAT SA LIGAYA
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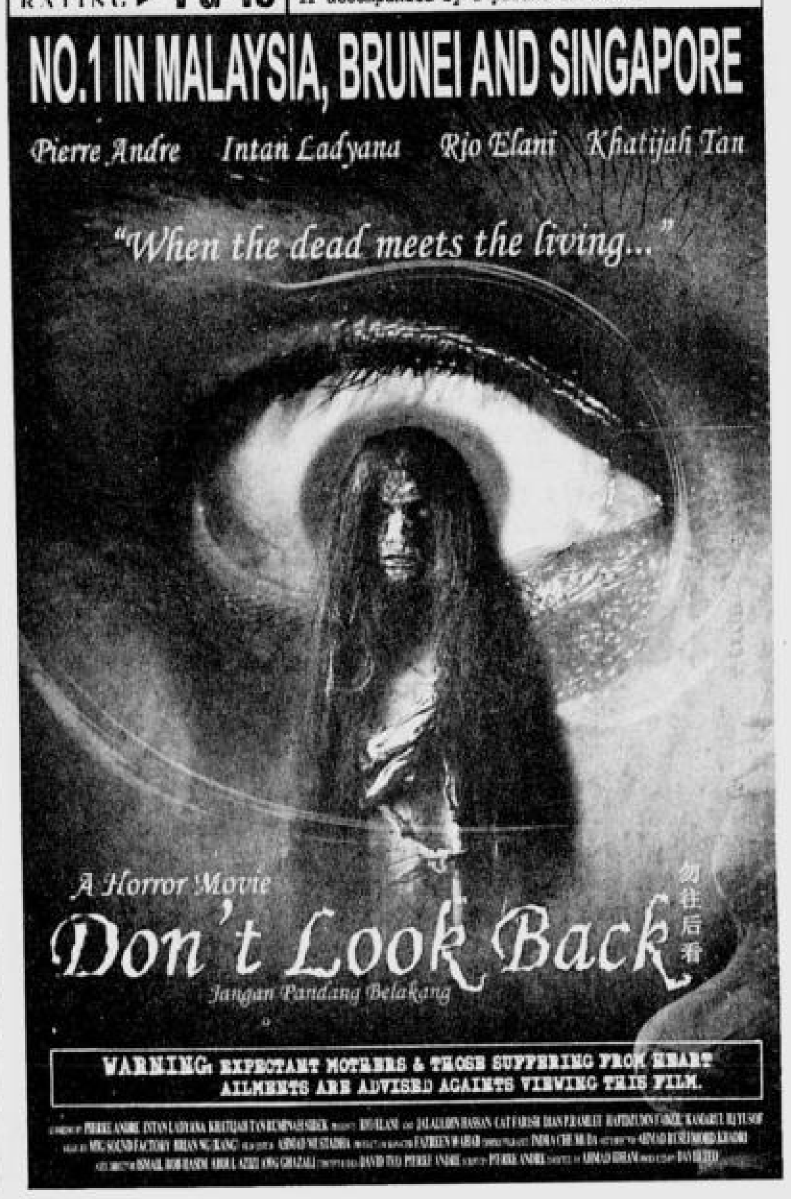
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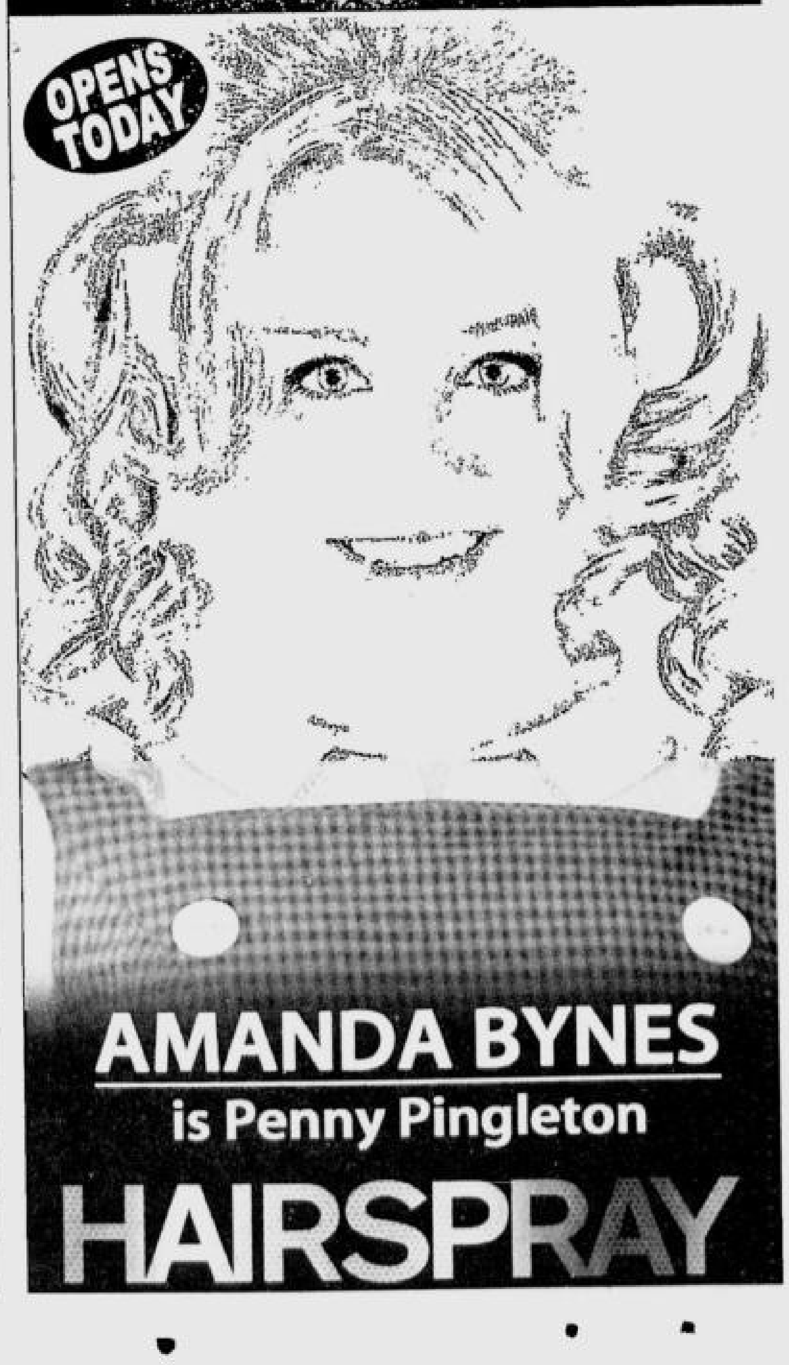
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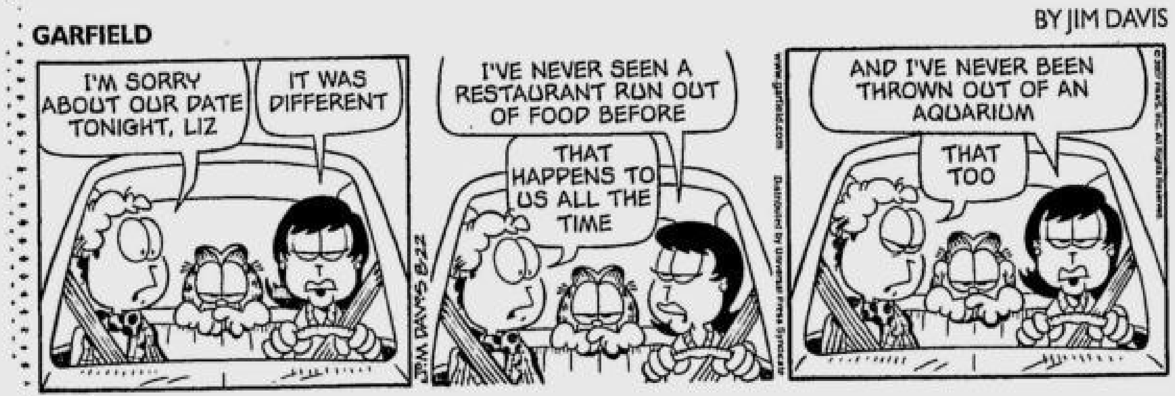
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I'VE NEVER SEEN A RESTAURANT RUN OUT OF FOOD BEFORE
THAT HAPPENS TO US ALL THE TIME
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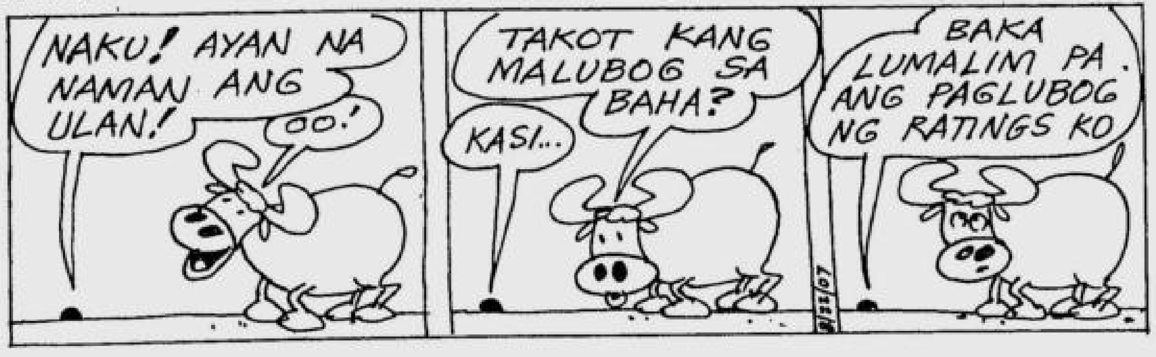
NAKU! AYAN NA NAMAN ANG ULAN!
OO!
TAKOT KANG MALUBOG SA BAHA?
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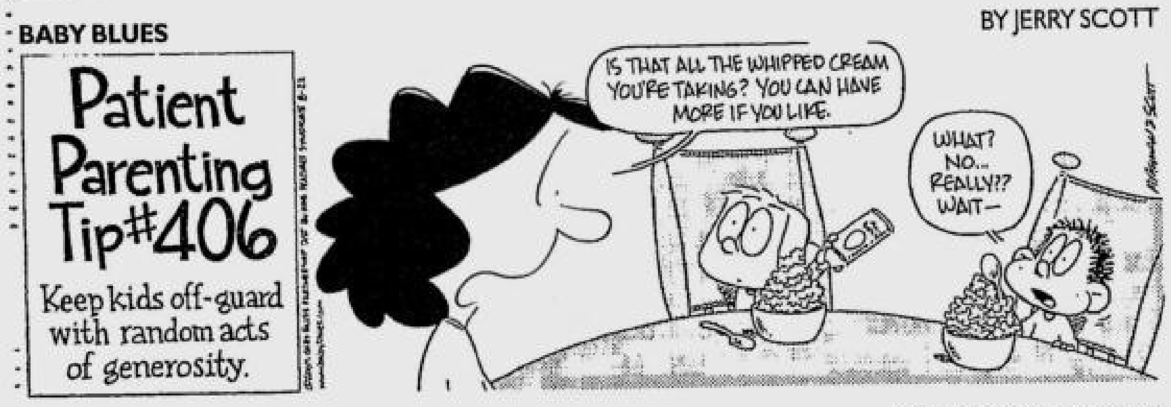
BY JERRY SCOTT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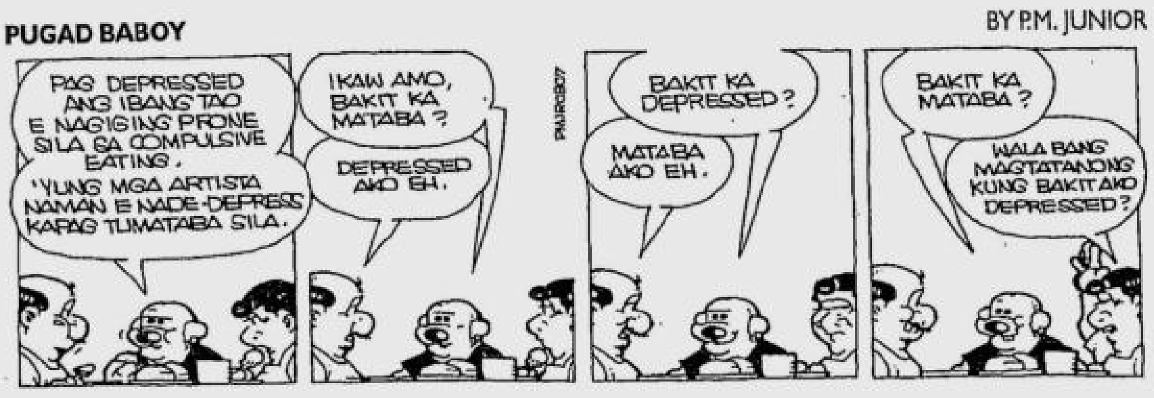
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IKAW AMO, BAKIT KA MATABA?
DEPRESSED AKO EH.
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MATABA AKO EH.
BAKIT KA MATABA?
WALA BANG MAGTATANONG KUNG BAKIT AKO DEPRESSED?

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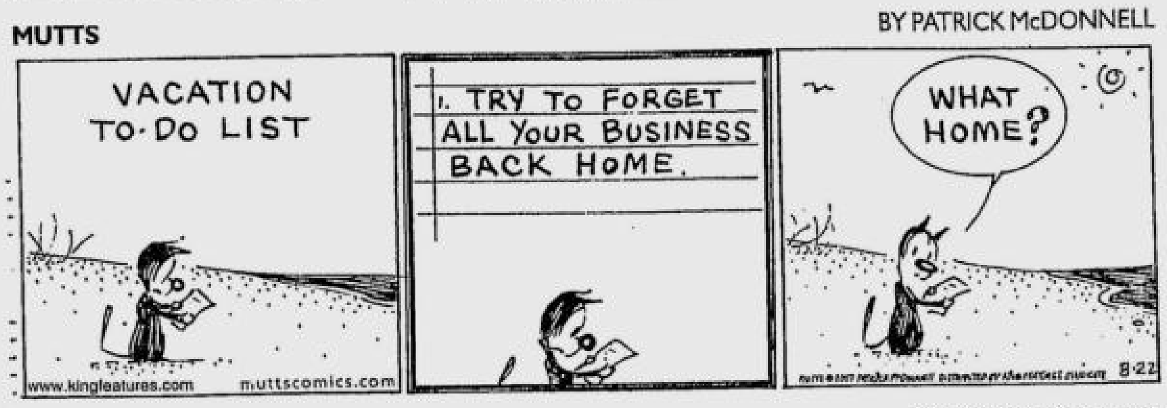
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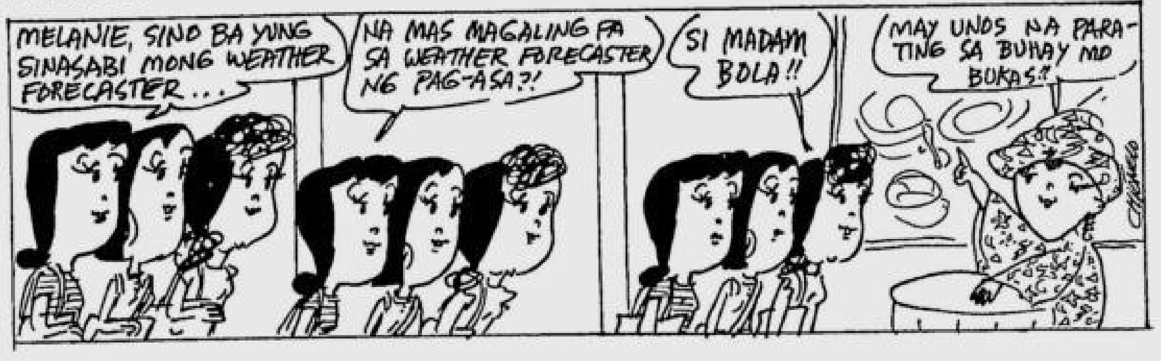
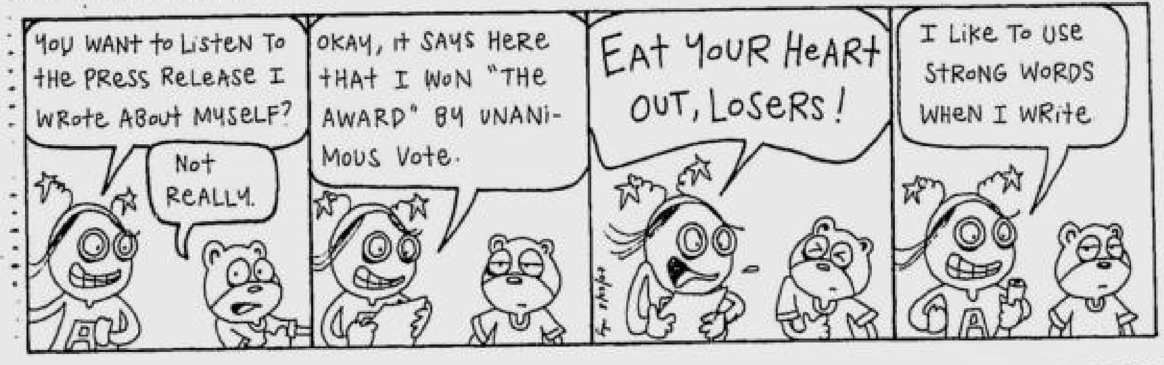
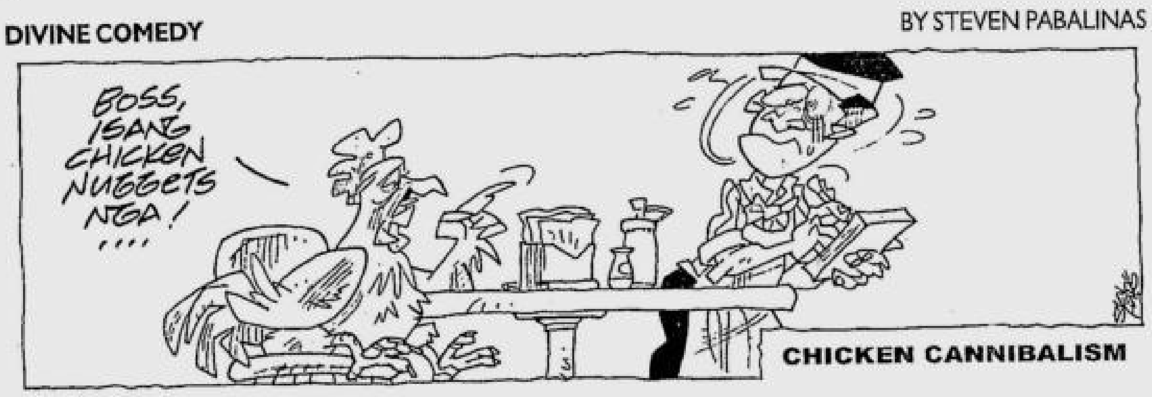
LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MELANIE, SINO BA YUNG SINASABI MONG WEATHER FORECASTER...
NA MAS MAGALING PA SA WEATHER FORECASTER NG PAG-ASA?!
SI MADAM BOLA!!
MAY UNOS NA PARATING SA BUHAY MO BUKAS!

ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO

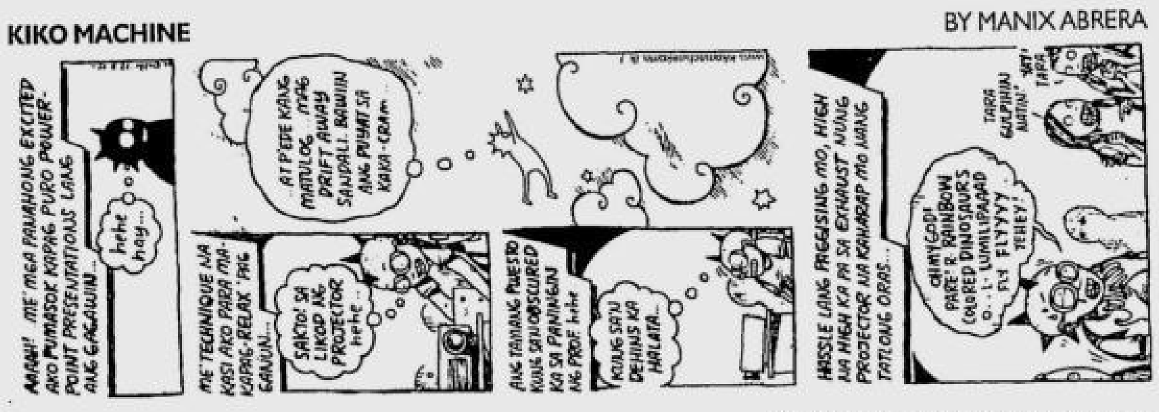

You WANT to Listen To the PRess ReLease I WRote About MySeLF?
Not ReALLY.
OKAY, it SAYS Here tHAT I WoN "THE AWARD" BY UNANIMOUS Vote.
EAt YOUR HeARt OUT, LoSeRS!
I Like To USe STRONG WORDS When I WRite

DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

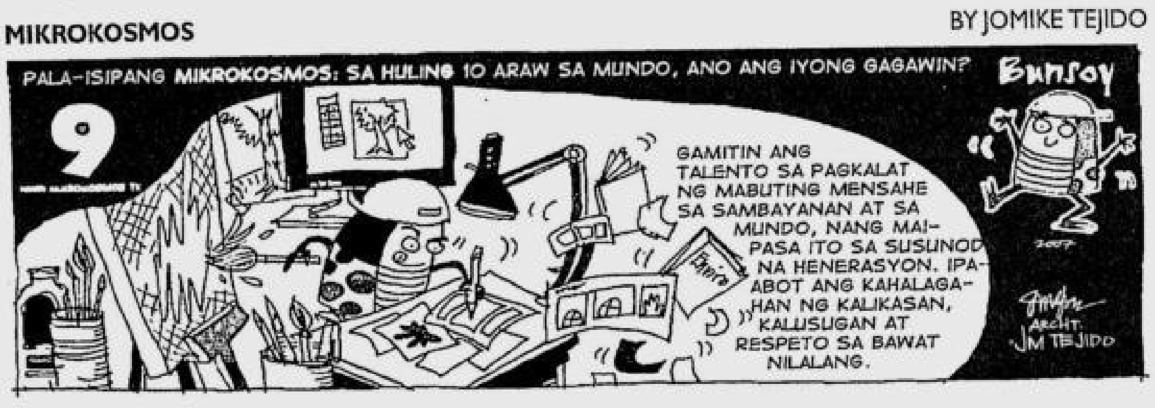

BOSS, ISANG CHICKEN NUGGETS NGA!

CHICKEN CANNIBALISM

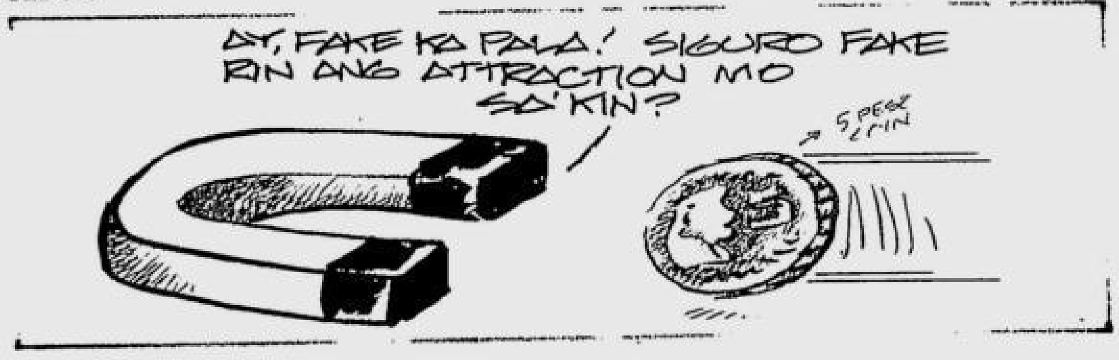
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


AAAH! ME' MGA PANAHONG EXCITED AKO PUMASOK KAPAG PURO POWER-POINT PRESENTATIONS LANG ANG GAGAWIN...
hehe hay...
AT P'EDE KANG MATULOG, MAG DRIFT AWAY SANDALI. BAWIIN ANG PUYAT SA KAKA-CRAM
ME' TECHNIQUE NA KASI AKO PARA MA-KAPAG-RELAX 'PAG GANUN...
SAKTO! SA LIKOD NG PROJECTOR hehe...
ANG TAMANG PUESTO KUNG SAN OBSCURED KA SA PANINGIN NG PROF. hehe
KUNG SAYU DEHINS KA HALATA...
HASSLE LANG PAG GISING MO, HIGH NA HIGH KA PA SA EXHAUST NUNG PROJECTOR NA KAHARAP MO NANG TATLONG ORAS...
OHMYGOD! PARE'R RAINBOW COLORED DINOSAURS O..!- LUMILIPAAAD FLY FLYYYY YEHEY!
TARA GULPIHIN NATIN!
YAY! TARA

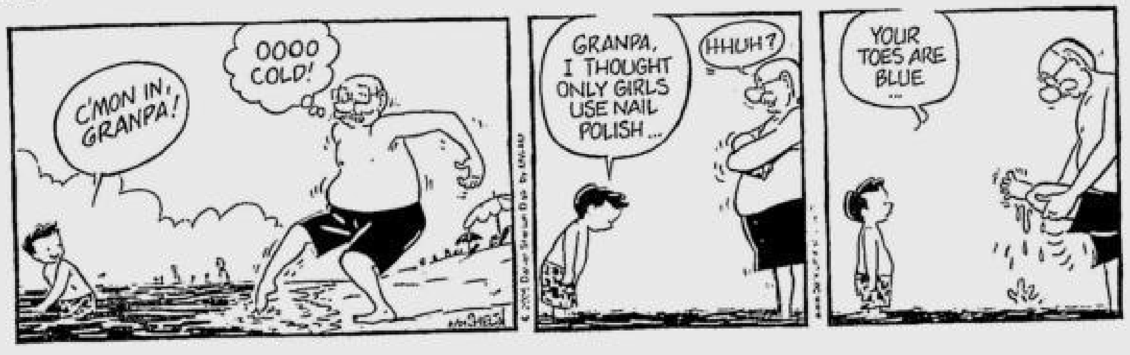
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


PALA-ISIPANG MIKROKOSMOS: SA HULING 10 ARAW SA MUNDO, ANO ANG IYONG GAGAWIN?
Bunsoy
9
GAMITIN ANG TALENTO SA PAGKALAT NG MABUTING MENSAHE SA SAMBAYANAN AT SA MUNDO, NANG MAIPASA ITO SA SUSUNOD NA HENERASYON. IPAABOT ANG KAHALAGAHAN NG KALIKASAN, KALUSUGAN AT RESPETO SA BAWAT NILALANG.
ARCHT. JM TEJIDO
2007

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

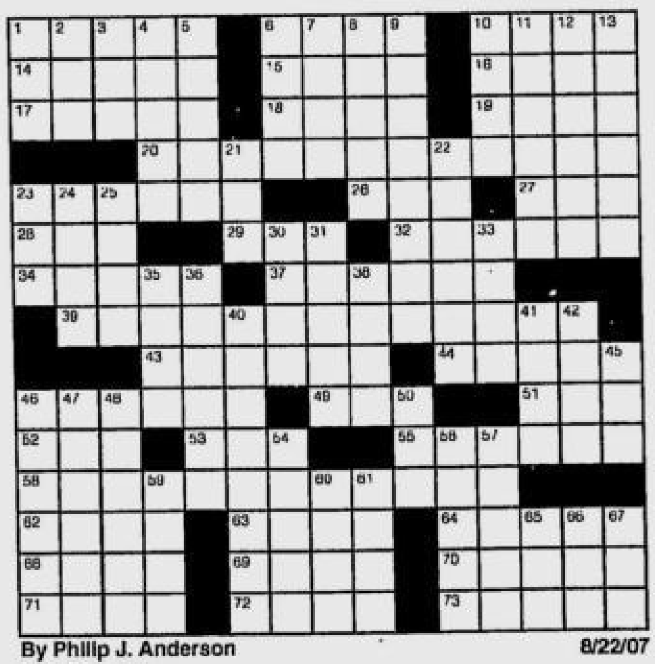

AY, FAKE KA PALA! SIGURO FAKE RIN ANG ATTRACTION MO SA'KIN?
5 PESO COIN

BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


C'MON IN, GRANPA!
OOOO COLD!
GRANPA, I THOUGHT ONLY GIRLS USE NAIL POLISH...
HHUH?
YOUR TOES ARE BLUE
...

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Holy city of Islam
6 Uneven cut
10 Ruer's word
14 Test result
15 Capp's hyena
16 Dryer deposit
17 Soviet labor camp
18 Banned spray
19 Sicilian volcano
20 One of the bosses at Kodak?
23 Deadly fly
26 Homily topic
27 Caustic cleaner
28 Flushed
29 Not on the mark
32 Emphasize
34 Mountain spur
37 Dawn goddess
39 One of the bosses at the tree farm?
43 Merchant
44 Blender setting
46 Joint beneficiary
49 Patriotic org.
51 Single
52 Lennon's love
53 Animation frame
55 The Wizard of Menlo Park
58 One of the bosses at the dressing plant?
62 Arch type
63 Speckled steed
64 Noah's ark measurement
68 Tree hatchery
69 Automaker Ferrari
70 Poet Doolittle
71 Comic Johnson of "Laugh-In"
72 Face features
73 Rose extract



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
8/22/07

DOWN
1 NYC arena
2 French silver crown
3 Fig. list
4 Ships
5 Patronage
6 Cutting criticism
7 Maintained
8 Diarist Nin
9 Humorist Keillor
10 Actor Baldwin
11 Diminutive
12 Pesters
13 Gapes
21 August sign
22 Snare
23 Song syllable
24 Croat's neighbor
25 German river
30 Saudi king
31 Strong vapors
33 Italian sauce
35 London gallery
36 Add meaning to
38 __ avis
40 Untroubled
41 Aphrodite's son
42 Clinton cabinet member
45 Evening in an ode
46 Type of cigar
47 Wild ass
48 Like Abe
50 "Man on the Moon" group
54 Daft
56 Putin's getaway
57 North Slope dweller
59 Group of badgers
60 Level to the ground
61 Eve's grandson
65 Three-letter sandwich
66 Actress Lupino
67 Paver's goo

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

Z	I	G	■	C	H	A	F	F	■	A	L	B	U	M
O	R	R	■	A	M	P	L	E	■	M	E	R	C	I
R	O	A	D	T	O	P	E	R	D	I	T	I	O	N
A	N	N	E	■	■	L	A	M	E	■	M	A	N	E
■	■	D	A	N	T	E	S	I	N	F	E	R	N	O
W	I	S	D	O	M	■	■	■	Y	O	O	■	■	■
A	O	L	■	R	A	Z	O	R	■	B	U	B	B	A
T	W	A	S	■	N	O	B	E	L	■	T	R	O	T
T	A	M	I	L	■	O	S	C	A	R	■	E	M	O
■	■	■	D	O	C	■	■	■	M	C	N	A	B	B
T	O	H	E	L	L	A	N	D	B	A	C	K	■	■
O	P	A	L	■	A	L	B	A	■	■	A	F	A	R
D	E	V	I	L	W	E	A	R	S	P	R	A	D	A
A	R	E	N	A	■	R	E	L	I	C	■	S	A	C
Y	A	L	E	S	■	T	R	A	P	S	■	T	R	Y

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8/22/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're a creative realist. You're ambitious and proud, but also practical. Because you're daring and courageous, you're very assertive. You're happy working once you find your field. Many of you are humanitarian and altruistic. Nevertheless, you like your goodies! As you age, relationships become more important to you. The year ahead offers you an interesting choice.
Birthdate of: Adewale Akinnuoye-Agbaje, actor; Giada De Laurentiis, TV celebrity chef; Ray Bradbury, sci-fi writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): The stars are giving you increasing energy to work during the next few weeks. Take advantage of this. Get as much done as you can. (Make hay while the sun shines!)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): The months ahead are a perfect time for vacations, participating in sports, enjoying playful times with children and exploring your creative potential. Romance also is blessed!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your attention now turns to domestic matters. Real estate deals might also make demands on your time. Conversations with family members will be significant in the next few weeks.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Fasten your seatbelts! You're looking at a busy month ahead. Short trips, increased time with siblings, reading and writing plus a busy schedule keep you hopping!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Financial matters and new ways of earning money concern you. Give serious thought to your ideas in the next few weeks. Expect to do some power shopping as well.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Tomorrow the Sun enters your sign, where it will stay for the next four weeks. It's your turn to recharge your batteries for the rest of the year. Make the most of this!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You might want to lie low for the next few weeks. You have a lot to think about. Before your new year begins, think about how you want it to be different from last year.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Your popularity rating is going to increase now. Accept all invitations. Enjoy good times with friends and groups.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might be thrust into the limelight for some reason during the next few weeks. Bosses, parents and VIPs suddenly notice you; but more than that, they're impressed with you!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Plan to do something different in the next few weeks because your desire for adventure or to learn more about the world is growing! You want more out of life.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Increased responsibilities turn your attention to wills, inheritances, debt, taxes and coming to terms with other people's values. Time to work!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You can learn more about yourself through your closest friendships and partnerships now. Think about what you really want in a friend.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	8	1				6	7	
2			3		7			9
9			1					4
7			9					8
	3	5				4	9	
4			5					6
5			8					7
1			6		9			3
	9	7				8	4	

Difficulty Level ★★★
8/22

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	9	2	3	8	7	6	5	1
8	3	1	5	6	2	7	4	9
7	5	6	4	9	1	3	8	2
9	1	3	7	5	4	2	6	8
5	4	8	6	2	3	1	9	7
6	2	7	9	1	8	5	3	4
2	8	9	1	3	5	4	7	6
1	7	5	8	4	6	9	2	3
3	6	4	2	7	9	8	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★

One reason that celebrity marriages fail

VINA MORALES *"sobrang"* **in love.**

By Inquirer and Inquirer.net Entertainment Staff

RUSHES

TAKE IT FROM SOMEONE who's been there.

An Associated Press dispatch from New York quotes Ethan Hawke, whose split from Uma Thurman caused a tabloid frenzy, as saying that being half of a celebrity couple can be hard on the ego.

"It's unfair when one person's career is taking off and the other is really suffering," the 36-year-old tells AMC's "Shootout" in an interview that aired last Sunday.

"It's not that they're jealous of each other; it's that the person you share your life with isn't in the mood to support," Hawke says. "You want to have a pity party for yourself, but they're off to the Golden Globes and you don't want to go because everyone will think you are jealous."

Hawke and Thurman were married in 1998. She filed for divorce in 2004. The couple have two children.

* * *

Top of the talk shows

For those who missed last weekends show biz gabfests:

- Lucy Torres-Gomez on the alleged squabble between husband Richard Gomez and Cesar Montano: "I really don't think there's an issue. I think it's more of people wanting there to be an issue. If they really sit down and talk about what the issue is, there won't be an issue to talk about. (Got it.)

LUCY: No issue.

- Ara Mina on rumors she had caused a rift between Manny Pacquiao and his wife Jinky:

  "*Kahit papa'no, naba*-bother *ako. Kung ano man 'yon ayokong makialam sa inyo.*"

- Shaina Magdayao on the love affairs of sister Vina Morales: "*Kung saan siya masaya, wala naman kaming magagawa ng pamilya. Susuportahan namin siya.*" (Something going on there?)

- Vina Morales confirming her relationship with businessman Cedric Lee: "*Sinabi ko kay* Ced … *bukas … may* interview … *ako [sa]* 'The Buzz' … *Ano'ng isasagot ko?* Tell them about the annulment (of his marriage to wife Judy). *Sabi ko,* okay. *Nasa*-process *po [ang* annulment]. *Nasa* lawyer *na.*"

ANNABELLE, left, to Ruffa: "*Bahala ka.*"

- Asked if Cedric loves her and if she loves him: "Sobra po."

- Zsa-Zsa Padilla on rumors that daughter Karylle and her boyfriend Dingdong Dantes had broken up: "I told her, 'You have to be very strong. *Kung madali kang masaktan, madali kang mapikon, umalis ka na lang ng* show biz.'"

- Cristine Reyes on her launching movie that was put on hold: "*Hindi ako nagmamadali sa* launching movie *na 'yan.*"

- Regine Velasquez on her idea of a perfect wedding: "I just want that day to be peaceful."

- Ryan Agoncillo on marrying Judy Ann Santos: "*Ang* wedding, party *lang yan eh. 'Yung* next day onwards … *'yun ang pinaghahandaan namin.*"

- Gretchen Barretto on keeping the lines open with her sisters: "*Ayokong masira ulit kung ano ang meron kami ngayon.*"

- Yilmaz Bektas on reuniting with the Gutierrez family: "I plan [to] speak with them but [in] the correct and perfect time. I'm not scared … of course, I am nervous and also shy. It's not only Ruffa and my two kids I want back, I want all the family back, like Gutierrez family and Bektas family, have to be together."

Ruffa 'scared' but …

- Ruffa Gutierrez on reconciling with husband Yilmaz Bektas: "*Sino bang babae o nanay na ayaw maging* intact *o mabuo ang pamilya? Ang pagkakamali namin ni* Yilmaz, we shared everything with the public. *Sana, may mga bagay na hindi namin nasabi … para kami na lang ang magharap at mag-ayos..* (*'Di na kami kasali?*)

- On her mom Annabelle Rama's concerns: "*Sinasabi niya na naghahanap ako ng sakit sa katawan. Sabi niya, baka gawin ulit ni* Yilmaz *'yon. Siyempre, takot din ako. Takot din ang mga kaibigan ko. Takot din ang mga magulang ko.* (*Kami rin.*)

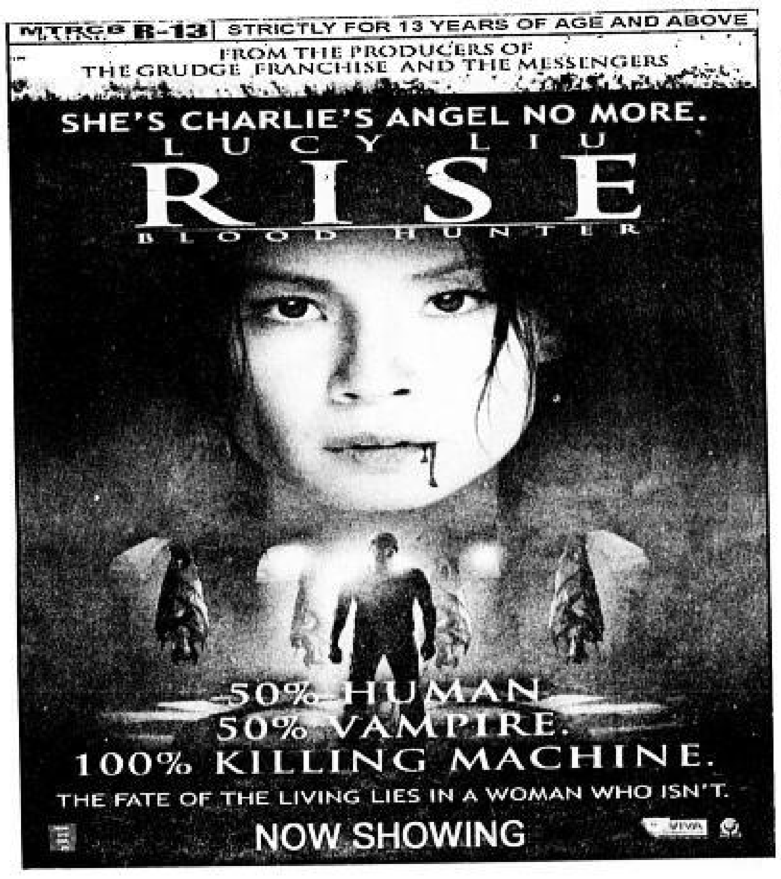
  "I think the best thing for me to do is to pray. I ask all my friends and the public to pray for me." (*A, kasali pa rin kami.*)

- Annabelle's message to Ruffa Gutierrez: "*Bahala ka. Nakausap ko ang doktor … sabi sa akin, 'yun daw mga babaeng* battered, *talagang matagal makipag-hiwalay sa lalaki kasi hinahanap-hanap nila ang sakit sa katawan. Gano'n si* Ruffa. *Biro mo naman, tinusok-tusok siya ng kutsilyo, ginupit ang buhok. Ginulpi. Dumating sa Pilipinas, may* black eye. *Akala ko talaga ayaw na niya. Naku, 'Day, patay na patay.* Ruffa … *pagdating mo sa* abroad, *dahan dahan ka … tingnan ko lang kung di [ka] gugulpihin.*"

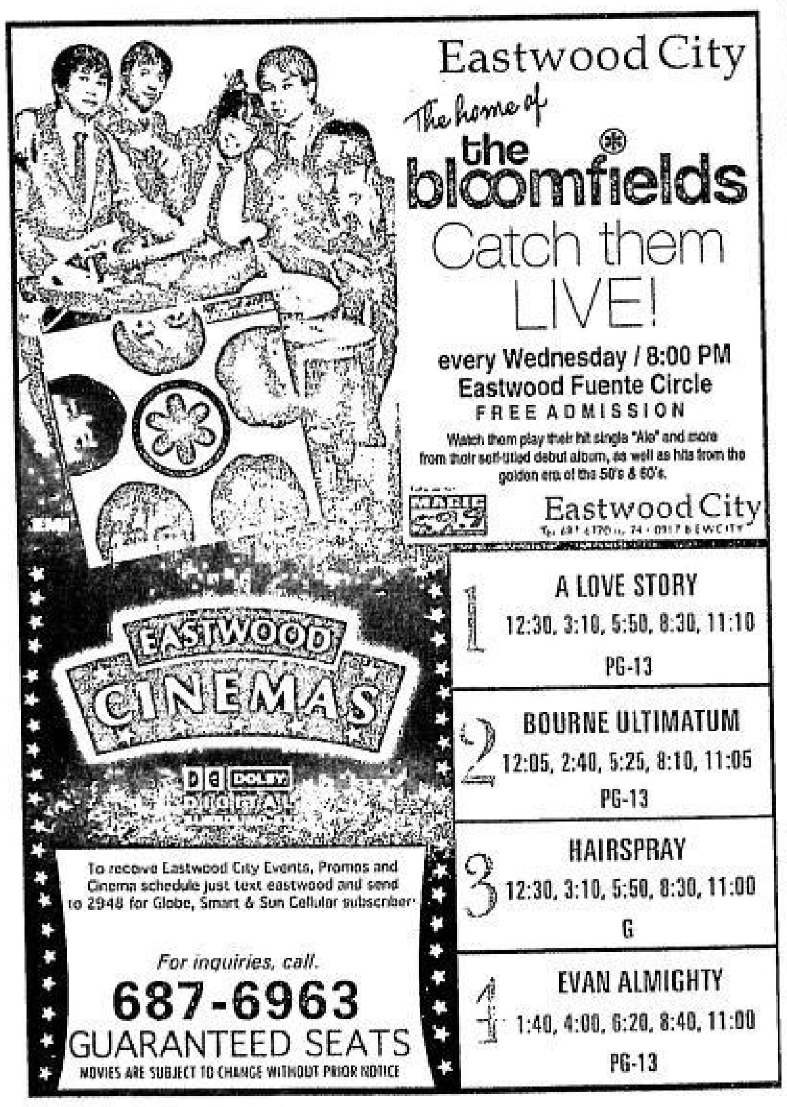
POWER PLANT
CINEMA
ROCKWELL CENTER, MAKATI TEL: 898-1440/41 DOLBY DIGITAL

RUSH HOUR 3 PG13	EVAN ALMIGHTY G	BOURNE ULTIMATUM PG13
A LOVE STORY PG13	SURF'S UP G	HAIRSPRAY PG13

MOVIES & SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE


MTRCB R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
FROM THE PRODUCERS OF THE GRUDGE FRANCHISE AND THE MESSENGERS
SHE'S CHARLIE'S ANGEL NO MORE.
LUCY LIU
RISE
BLOOD HUNTER
50% HUMAN
50% VAMPIRE.
100% KILLING MACHINE.
THE FATE OF THE LIVING LIES IN A WOMAN WHO ISN'T.
NOW SHOWING
VIVA

MTRCB RATING G GENERAL AUDIENCE | ALL AGES ADMITTED
OPENS TODAY
$108,679,524
TOTAL BOX-OFFICE GROSS AS OF 08/13/2007
THE BIGGEST U.S. OPENING ON RECORD FOR A MUSICAL
John Travolta
Michelle Pfeiffer
Amanda Bynes
Zac Efron
James Marsden and Queen Latifah
HAIRSPRAY
Brittany Snow
Christopher Walken
Elijah Kelley
Allison Janney
introducing Nikki Blonsky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the bloomfields
Catch them LIVE!
every Wednesday / 8:00 PM
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FREE ADMISSION
Watch them play their hit single "Alo" and more from their self-titled debut album, as well as hits from the golden era of the 50's & 60's.
MAGIC 89.9
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EASTWOOD CINEMAS
DOLBY DIGITAL

1	A LOVE STORY 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:10	PG-13
2	BOURNE ULTIMATUM 12:05, 2:40, 5:25, 8:10, 11:05	PG-13
3	HAIRSPRAY 12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00	G
4	EVAN ALMIGHTY 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	PG-13

To receive Eastwood City Events, Promos and Cinema schedule just text eastwood and send to 2948 for Globe, Smart & Sun Cellular subscriber
For inquiries, call.
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

OPENING TODAY

Signos

Stars Irma Adlawan, Ricky Davao, Lauren Novero, Luis Alandy

Directed by Alfred Aloysus L. Adlawan

A city-based architect (Alandy) returns to his hometown. Soon enough, he gets spooked by a series of mysterious deaths in the village. Exclusively in SM Digital Cinemas.

A Short Film About the Indio Nacional (or the Prolonged Sorrow of Filipinos)

Stars Bodjie Pascua, Suzette Velasco, Lemuel Galman, Mark Joshua Maclang

Directed by Raya Martin

Jay Weissberg of Variety calls it "a beautiful paean to the common man … a fascinating work that rewards patience and confirms Martin's place as a talent to watch." Exclusively in IndieSine, Robinsons Galleria.

Xenoa

Stars Isabel Granada, Paolo Ballesteros, Geryk Genasky, PJ Lanot

Directed by Sean L. Lim

A self-confessed sci-fi junkie, debuting director Lim counts Steven Spielberg's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and George Lucas' "Star Wars" as favorites. He admits that "Xenoa" takes inspiration from the latter. Exclusively in SM Digital Cinemas.

Hairspray

Stars John Travolta, Nikki Blonsky, Zac Efron, Michelle Pfeiffer

Directed by Adam Shankman

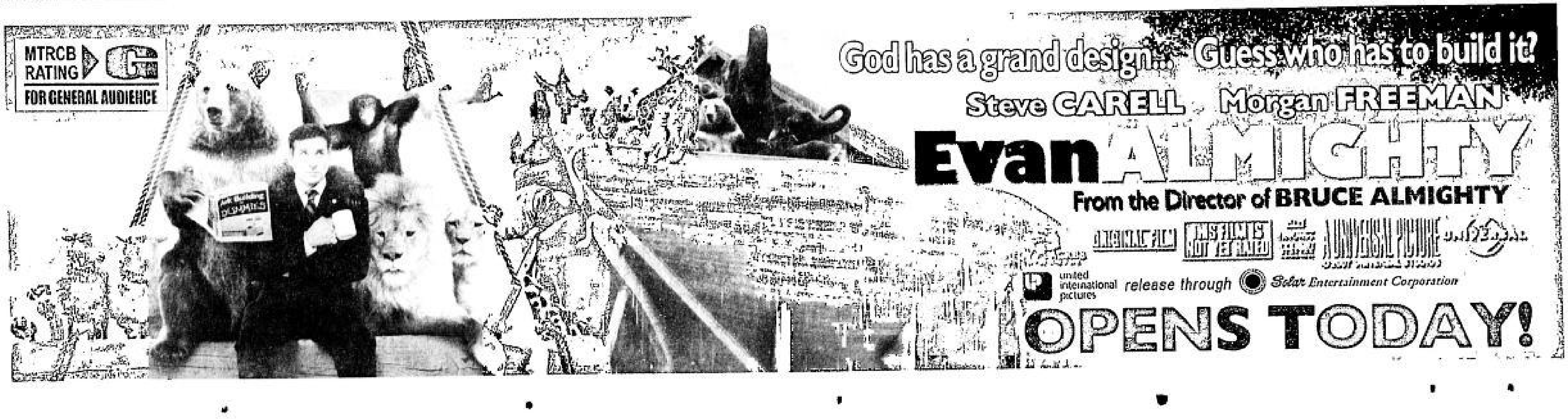
This is a movie-turned-musical-turned-movie musical. Roger Ebert of Chicago Sun-Times raves: "There's a lot of craft and slyness lurking beneath the 1960s goofiness."

Evan Almighty

Stars Steve Carell, Morgan Freeman, Lauren Graham, John Goodman

Directed by Tom Shadyac

This sequel to the Jim Carrey hit casts a minor character in the original, the vain newscaster (Carell), as hero. Peter Travers of Rolling Stone rants: "At a reported $175 million, [this] shameless juvenile [movie] … is the most expensive Hollywood remake ever made. [But] it's not funny. Every laugh costs $20 million."


MTRCB RATING G FOR GENERAL AUDIENCE
God has a grand design… Guess who has to build it?
Steve CARELL Morgan FREEMAN
Evan ALMIGHTY
From the Director of BRUCE ALMIGHTY
A UNIVERSAL PICTURE
united international pictures release through Solar Entertainment Corporation
OPENS TODAY!

E-mail: entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback:
inquirer ent name/age/city/message
to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

SHAWN KLUSH of Franklin, Tennessee is declared winner of The Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist Contest in Memphis, Tennessee Friday. Klush beat out 10 other contestants in the competition endorsed by Graceland and witnessed by fans from around the world. AFP

GMA 7 soars like Davao's eagle

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

ASIDE FROM DAVAO'S KADAYAWAN annual festivities, it was an extra special weekend as GMA Network brought its hottest stars to Durian Republic. GMA 7 also gave Dabawenyos an overdose of "serbisyong totoo" via "Libreng Gupit, Libreng Kodakan" with the stars, "Libreng Serbisyo" and a two-day job fair.

Some of the stars who joined the celebration: **Marian Rivera, Dingdong Dantes, Dennis Trillo, Paulene Luna, Keempee de Leon, Manilyn Reynes, Iwa Motto, Pekto Diaz** and **John Feir** ("Cookie & Bellie"), **Nadine Samonte and Chuck.**

I instantly warmed up to **Rikki Escudero,** amiable head of GMA Regional TV and AVP of News and Expansion. She tells it like it is:

"GMA 7 does not make false claims of being No. 1 in the regions but we are definitely getting there. Many of our programs are beating their rival shows. 'Testigo' continues its winning streak here, so we've extended it to an hour. And 'Kuyaw' is lording it over in its time slot."

By January 2008, the state-of-the-art GMA studios are set to open. It will improve the transmitters' signal, strengthening the network's regional presence.

German-Pinay charmer

I got to chat with my long lost buddy Keempee. He fondly calls me "Ms Emociones." But it was his turn to show some emotion as he told me he had a crush on **Susie Rexrodt**, the half-German, half-Pinay show biz segment host in Davao's daily newscast. When I teased Susie about it, she blushed. Will Kimpoy now be taking frequent trips to Eaglelandia?

New romance?

I ribbed Dennis Trillo: "Why don't you court Marian Rivera? Now that Angel Locsin has moved to Channel 2, it looks like your thwarted romance with her no longer has a chance."

He replied, smiling, "I don't want to get in the way of Marian and Dingdong's love team."

I shot back: "But Dingdong has Karylle!" He laughed. "*Parang* awkward, because Marian and I have the same manager."

I prodded some more: "Which makes it all the more convenient." Dennis' naughty grin seemed to tell me he's ready, willing but still unable to make a move, not by choice but due to show biz circumstances beyond his control.

Confirmation

Pauleen and I enjoyed some girl talk. When her sweet pic with Mayor **Sherwin Gatchalian** first came out in this column, it sparked speculations that they were an item. Now it can be told. They've been on for several months now but Pauleen told me not to say so when she allowed me to print the photo.

"*Nagulat ako* when Sherwin admitted our relationship in 'Palaban' so *umamin na rin ako,*" she said, giggling.

The love they share is as huge as their age difference. Age does not matter if love is kept new so it won't age.

Personal

Endless thanks to GMA 7's **Butch Raquel** and his staff **Ramir Orteza, Hannah Dumaual** and **Barbette Atienza** for a fun-filled weekend. Thanks also to my colleagues **Shirley Pizarro** of Manila Bulletin; **Salve Asis,** Pang Masa; Tita **Nora Calderon,** Pilipino Star Ngayon; **Rowena Agilada,** Tempo; **Kristine Gonzales,** Business Mirror; **Mario Hernando,** Malaya.

Just like the Durian's unique aroma, your kindness lingers on. Carry on, GMA, in scaling the heights of the ratings game.

E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.

Elvis is king again in UK

LONDON—ELVIS PRESLEY WAS ONCE again king of the British pop charts on Sunday as fans marked the 30th anniversary of his death by sending a greatest hits album straight to the number one spot.

The compilation, "The King," dethroned London singer-songwriter Kate Nash, who slipped to second in the album charts with her debut effort "Made of Bricks," the Official UK Charts Company said.

Elvis was the only new entry in the top 10 which was otherwise little changed.

First-ever

In Memphis, Tennessee on Friday night, Shawn Klush, a Pittston, Pennsylvania native, was named the "ultimate Elvis tribute artist," in the first-ever tournament for Elvis impersonators sanctioned by Elvis Presley's estate.

Klush won over the sold-out crowd at a downtown Memphis concert hall with a version of "Viva Las Vegas" and then clinched the title against a field of nine other Elvis "tribute artists" with a rendition of "You Gave Me A Mountain."

Clad in a replica of Presley's signature 1970s-era white jumpsuit, Klush bested two other veterans of the highly competitive Las Vegas Elvis circuit, Trent Carlini and Donny Edwards.

Contestants were judged on performance, appearance and respect for Elvis.

Reuters

A new wave of war films coming soon

LOS ANGELES—HOLLYWOOD FILMMAKers are preparing to unleash an unprecedented wave of war movies on cinema-goers.

In a notable break with the past—where antiwar films were released several years after the conflict in question—a new genre has been created even as US troops remain on the front lines of the "War on Terror."

The release in the United States next month of "In the Valley of Elah," a gritty drama from Oscar-winning director Paul Haggis about the murder of an Iraq war veteran, signals the start of the onslaught.

The film is one of several that is going to test the willingness of movie-goers to embrace dramas about sensitive subjects such as post 9/11 security and the ongoing conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

After "In the Valley of Elah," "Grace is Gone," starring John Cusack, which earned

A NEW/ E2

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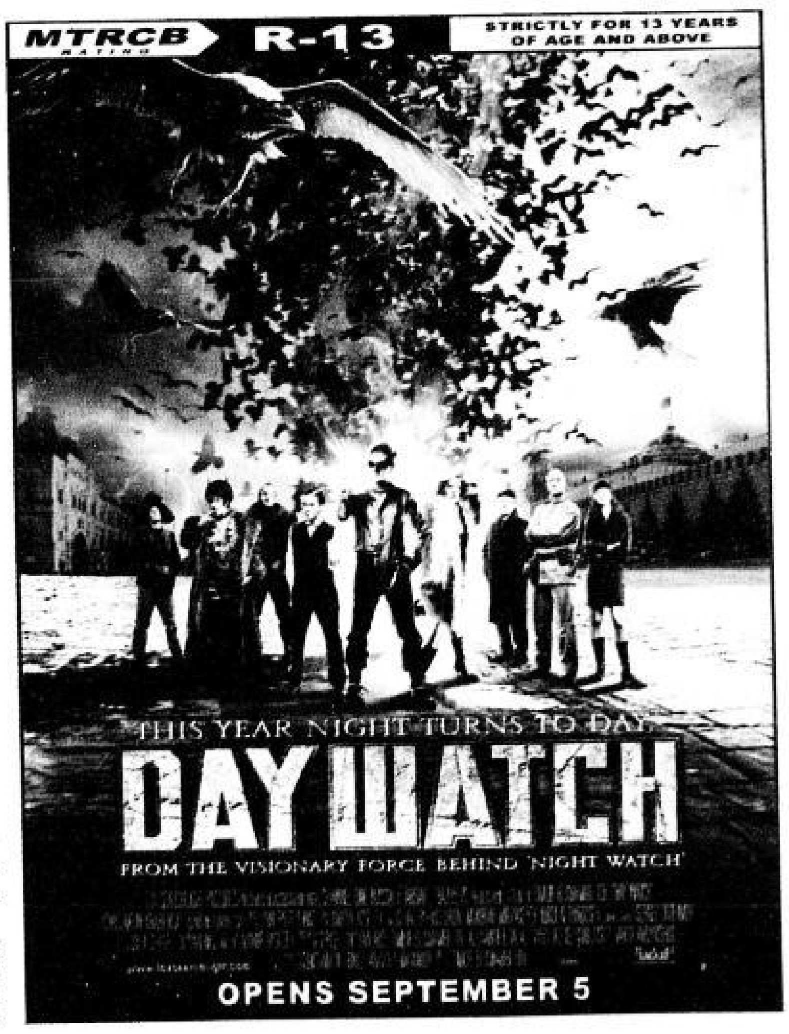
MTRCB RATING R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
THIS YEAR NIGHT TURNS TO DAY
DAY WATCH
FROM THE VISIONARY FORCE BEHIND 'NIGHT WATCH'
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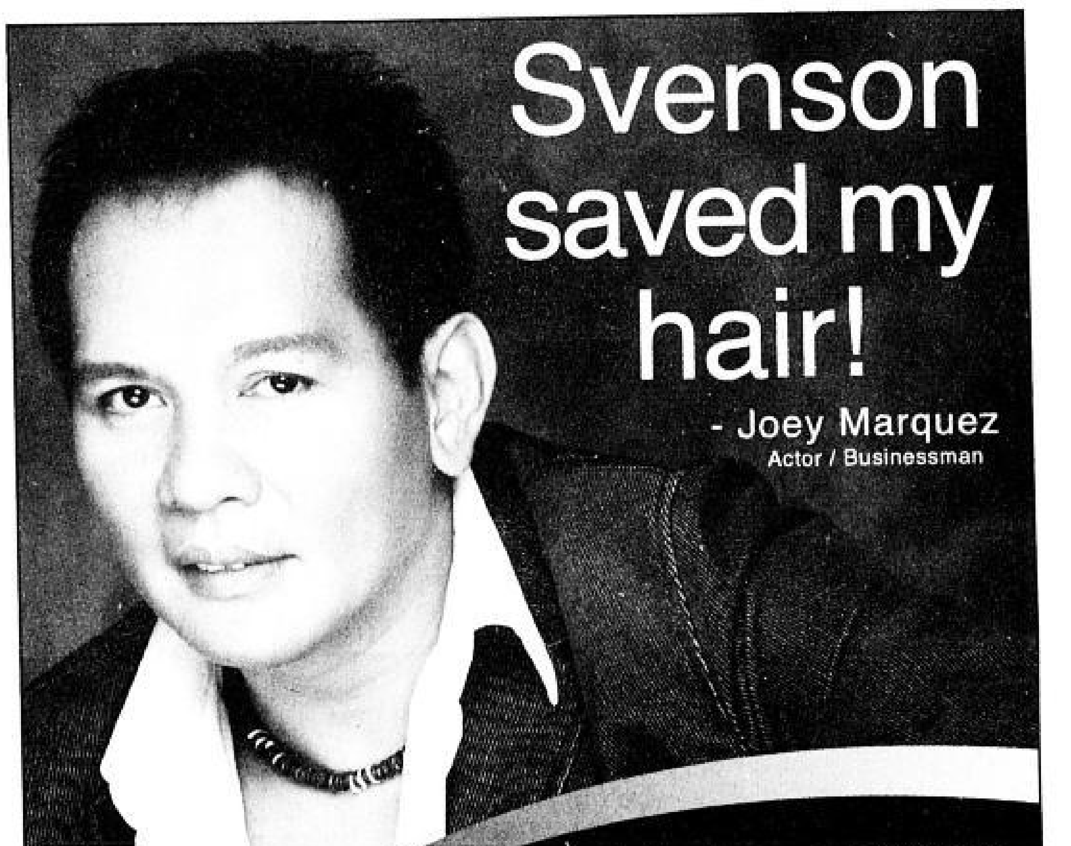
Svenson saved my hair!
- Joey Marquez
Actor / Businessman

For funnyman Joey Marquez, hairloss isn't something to laugh about. "I started losing my hair when I was about 35 years old," he recalls. "I was being called 'monsignor' because the bald spot on my head was increasing to the size of a monsignor's cap! You look older with less hair. And nobody wants to look old! But I didn't want to wear a wig either. With the Svenson treatments, I got back my real, natural hair! It was thicker and healthier. It made me look absolutely younger! Svenson saved me from hairloss!"

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Ali MALL 5
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2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
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5 A LOVE STORY
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BLADES of GLORY
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- The Hollywood Reporter

Blades of Glory is a comedic farce that takes on the world of figure skating. The film stars Will Ferrel (*Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby*) as Chazz Michaels and Jon Heder (*Benchwarmers*) as Jimmy MacElroy, two competitive figure skaters who, banned from competing in the men's single competition a few years back, are convinced to compete in the pairs skating category - with each other!

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MTRCB Rating: PG-13

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T-REX 2:30PM 7:00PM
ANT BULLY 12:30PM
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 SIGNOS
4 BLADES OF GLORY
5 HAIRSPRAY
6 XENOA
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1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 HAIRSPRAY
4 A LOVE STORY
5 A LOVE STORY
6 RUSH HOUR 3
7 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
8 SIGNOS
9 RISE
10 XENOA
11 OUIJA
12 SURF'S UP

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
4 A LOVE STORY
5 SIGNOS
6 HAIRSPRAY
7 RATATOUILLE
8 OUIJA
9 RISE
10 A LOVE STORY
11 BLADES OF GLORY
12 XENOA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SIGNOS
2 SURF'S UP
3 BLADES OF GLORY
4 OUIJA
5 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 HAIRSPARY
7 EVAN ALMIGHTY
8 A LOVE STORY
9 RUSH HOUR 3
10 RISE
11 RATATOUILLE
12 XENOA

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 EVAN ALMIGHTY
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 HAIRSPRAY
5 A LOVE STORY
6 RISE
7 BLADES OF GLORY
8 XENOA
9 SIGNOS
10 SURF'S UP

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 XENOA
5 HAIRSPRAY
6 A LOVE STORY

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 A LOVE STORY
3 SIGNOS
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 HAIRSPRAY
7 SURF'S UP
8 OUIJA
9 XENOA

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

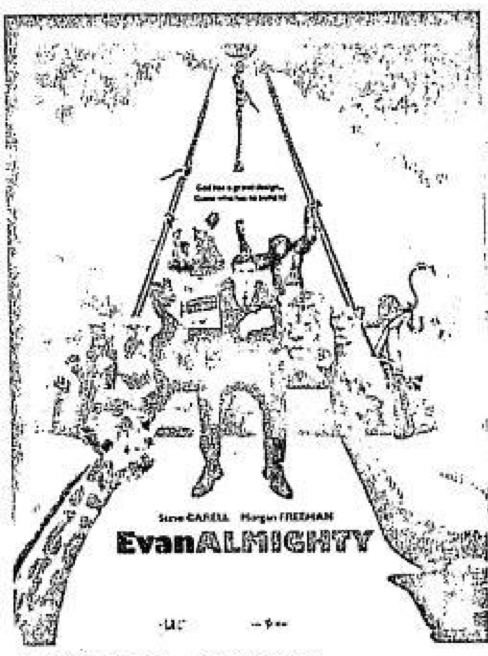
SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RISE
3 A LOVE STORY
4 RUSH HOUR 3
5 HAIRSPRAY
6 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
7 XENOA
8 BLADES OF GLORY
9 A LOVE STORY
10 OUIJA
11 THREE
12 SIGNOS

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 A LOVE STORY
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 A LOVE STORY
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

movietime
Fresh New Movie



From the directors of "Bruce Almighty" comes another story of unexpected apparation.

Former newscaster Evan Baxter (Steve Carell), who is now elected Congressman, leaves Buffalo behind and shepherds his family to suburban Northern Virginia. There, his life turns upside down when God (Morgan Freeman) appears and commands him to build an ark because flood is coming. Evan shuns it at first, but eventually, his faith leads people into a remarkable realization.

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2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SIGNOS
5 RUSH HOUR 3
6 RISE
7 OUIJA
8 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 SURF'S UP
5 A LOVE STORY
6 XENOA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 A LOVE STORY
3 BLADES OF GLORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 OUIJA
5 XENOA
6 A LOVE STORY

SM CIY LIPA (043) 784-0187
1 LICENSE TO WED
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 SURF'S UP

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 A LOVE STORY
2 LICENSE TO WED
3 BLIND DATING
4 BLADES OF GLORY

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 A LOVE STORY
3 LICENSE TO WED
4 EVAN ALMIGHTY

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 EVAN ALMIGHTY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 A LOVE STORY
4 BOURNE ULTIMATUM

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5349811
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 A LOVE STORY

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
2 LICENSE TO WED
3 A LOVE STORY
4 XENOA
5 EVAN ALMIGHTY
6 RUSH HOUR 3

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 A LOVE STORY
2 RUSH HOUR 3
3 LICENSE TO WED
4 SURF'S UP

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 SIGNOS
2 RESERVED
3 RUSH HOUR 3
4 A LOVE STORY
5 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
6 EVAN ALMIGHTY
7 RESERVED
8 BLIND DATING

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 RUSH HOUR 3
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 LICENSE TOP WED
5 XENOA
6 SIGNOS
7 A LOVE STORY
8 PLANET TERROR

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 A LOVE STORY
2 BOURNE ULTIMATUM
3 EVAN ALMIGHTY
4 BORDERTOWN

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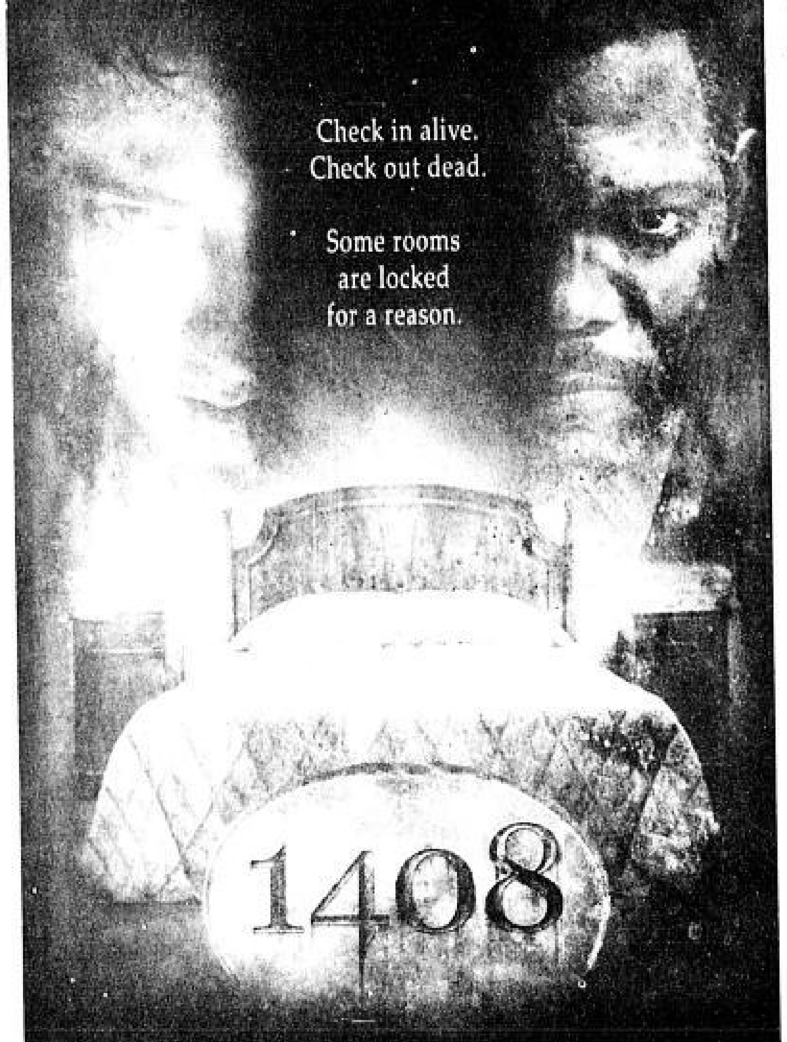
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OPENS AUGUST 29

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FROM BRETT RATNER
THE DIRECTOR OF "X-MEN 3: THE LAST STAND"
3RD WEEK
JACKIE CHAN CHRIS TUCKER
RUSH HOUR 3

D-lister win
'em over

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

COMEDIENNE KATHY GRIFFIN APPEARED in '90s sitcoms "Suddenly Susan" and "Seinfeld" but she's now better known for her self-proclaimed "D-lister" status.

In the current season of "Kathy Griffin: My Life on the D-List" (Jack-TV, Mondays, 11 p.m.), the stand-up comic and actress revels in her inimitable brand of self-deprecation once again, the reality show chronicling days in her life as someone who's not at all the toast-of-the-town Hollywood celeb. She's found her niche in recent years as someone who pokes fun at celebrities she encounters, and by letting people get detailed views of her life through her Emmy-nominated show.

The outsider

"My Life on the D-List" is still about Griffin's show biz dealings and life behind the scenes, which focuses on her entertaining interactions with her parents, hubby Matt, and the occasional guests visiting her swanky abode. It's interesting to see how some of her stand-up jokes develop.

But some of the most gut-busting are those that the redhead delivers (in her packed performances or in the show's interspersed booth commentary), about more popular celebrities like Tyra Banks, Sharon Stone, Clay Aiken and Whitney Houston, among a gaggle of others.

Rev

In a sense, she's the outsider who's occasionally on the inside, not-so-quietly gathering dirt that would be essential to her somewhat gossipy, attention-grabbing material. They've been well-received, and apart from doing that on her specials, like the hilarious "Allegedly," quick-witted Griffin makes fun of them here, too, whether in unrehearsed conversations or as part of the comments that bridge footage of her working or just relaxing.

Her misfit, underdog qualities offer a connection that other reality shows that star more famous personalities just don't—or can't—for one reason or another.

Griffin is opinionated as well. While she dislikes George Dubya, she went to Baghdad last

WEEKEND BOX OFFICE

Top 10 movies at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning August 17.

Superbad, Sony Pictures

TW	LW	Title	Gross
1	☆	Superbad	$31.2 mln
2	1	Rush Hour 3	$21.8 mln
3	2	The Bourne Ultimatum	$19.0 mln
4	3	The Simpsons Movie	$6.7 mln
5	☆	The Invasion	$6.0 mln
6	4	Stardust	$5.2 mln
7	5	Hairspray	$4.3 mln
8	6	Underdog	$3.6 mln
9	8	Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix	$3.5 mln
10	7	I Now Pronounce You Chuck and Larry	$3.5 mln

This Week, Last Week *Weeks in Rele*
☆ *New release*
Based on studio estimates compiled on Sunday
REUTERS

A new wave ...

From page E1

glowing reviews at the Sundance Film Festiv due for release in October. The movie is abo man whose wife is killed during service in Iraq.

Other films on the wars in Iraq and Afghani and the broader issues of post-9/11 security clude November's Robert Redford-directed "I for Lambs," starring Tom Cruise and Meryl Str Brian De Palma's "Redacted" and Gavin H "Rendition," starring Reese Witherspoon. as wife of an Egyptian-born chemical engineer ar ed without charge and whisked off to a secre tention facility to be quizzed by the CIA.

The spate of films will continue through 2 with Kimberly Peirce's "Stop Loss," about a vet who refuses to return to Iraq due out in Marc well as "The Hurt Locker," which recently b filming in Jordan and Iraq.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

KATHY GRIFFIN

year (shown in a recent episode) to entertain the troops. It's an educational process for her, as well as for viewers, to see which type of jokes work there.

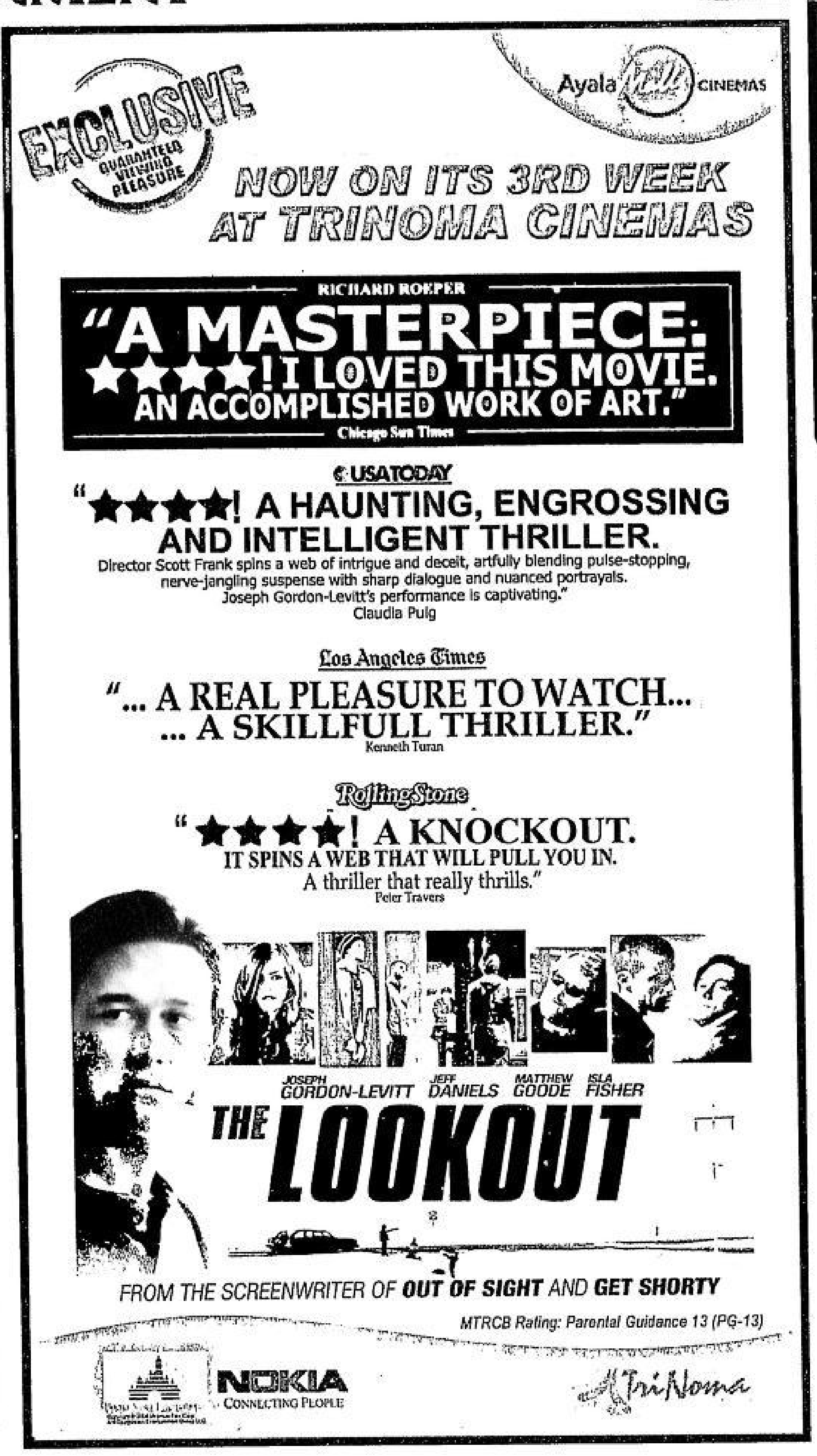
But as followers of "D-List" have seen throughout the course of the series, she's one motivated lady who'd stop at nothing to win people over. It's a victory for her to see the cheering of the multitude of weary American soldiers, her "new demographic."

Comic tilt

When she's back in the US, she entertains a visiting niece and nephew, and invites young Talan from "Laguna Beach" over for the occasion. At the same time, she has to stay on a strict diet for a magazine article that should tell of her dramatic weight loss.

She later talks about her Iraq experience in a radio interview, as well as in a stand-up show where she reacted rather amusingly to a heckler who didn't seem too keen on her poking fun at it. In another episode, she sits in as one of the judges in a comic competition show, which she admittedly did primarily for the face time it allowed her. Continued TV appearances help keep the D-listers visible.

"Kathy Griffin" still is one of the more rewarding glimpses into Hollywood's hierarchic eccentricities and rotes, and, as always, Kathy Griffin is that humdinger, the remarkably talented purveyor of honest opinions and scathing humor.



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Los Angeles Times
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Kenneth Turan

Rolling Stone
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Peter Travers

JOSEPH GORDON-LEVITT JEFF DANIELS MATTHEW GOODE ISLA FISHER

THE LOOKOUT

FROM THE SCREENWRITER OF OUT OF SIGHT AND GET SHORTY

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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TriNoma

SHANG CINEPLEX

① HAIRSPRAY
MTRCB GP
2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00

② BOURNE ULTIMATUM
MTRCB. PG-13

③ A LOVE STORY
MTRCB. PG-13

④ EVAN ALMIGHTY
MTRCB GP 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE
SURF'S UP (GP) / RUSH HOUR 3 (PG-13)

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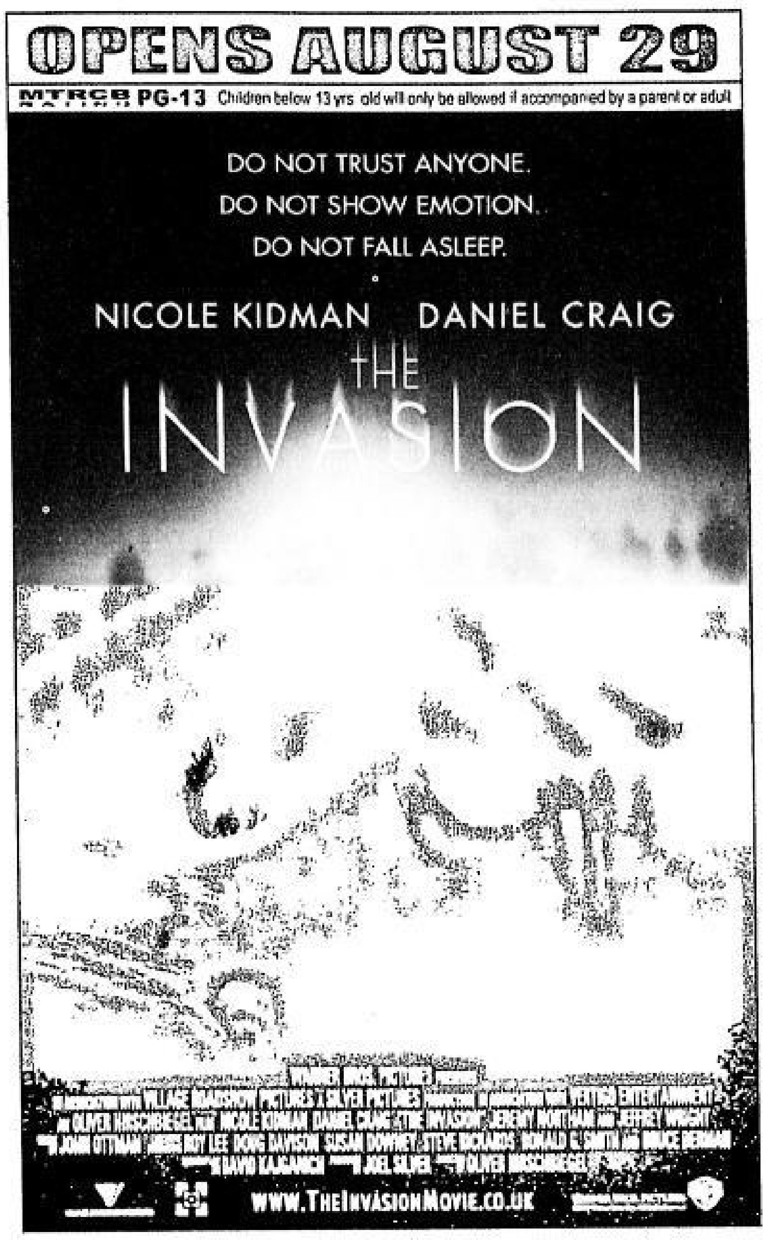

OPENS AUGUST 29

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Mall	Cinema	Movie	
GLORIETTA 1	1	SIGNOS	
	2	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
	3	RUSH HOUR 3	
	4	A LOVE STORY	
GLORIETTA 4	1	A LOVE STORY	
	2	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
	3 THX	HAIRSPRAY	GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	RISE	
	5	SURF'S UP	
	6	EVAN ALMIGHTY	
	7	RUSH HOUR 3	
GREENBELT 1	1	A LOVE STORY	
	2	EVAN ALMIGHTY	
GREENBELT 3	1 THX	HAIRSPRAY	GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	EVAN ALMIGHTY	GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	SURF'S UP	GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	RUSH HOUR 3	GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	GUARANTEED SEATS
ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	EVAN ALMIGHTY	
	2	HAIRSPRAY	
	3	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
	4	SURF'S UP	
	5	RUSH HOUR 3	
AYALA CENTER CEBU	1	EVAN ALMIGHTY	
	2	LICENSE TO WED	
	3	A LOVE STORY	
	4	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
MARKET! MARKET!	1	A LOVE STORY	
	2	HAIRSPRAY	
	3	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
	4	EVAN ALMIGHTY	
	5	RUSH HOUR 3	
TRINOMA • THX Certified • All-Digital Sound • All-Stadium Seating • Computerized Ticketing System • Recliner Seats	1	A LOVE STORY	
	2	SURF'S UP	
	3	THE LOOKOUT	GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	HAIRSPRAY	GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	RUSH HOUR 3	
	6	THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM	
	7 THX	EVAN ALMIGHTY	GUARANTEED SEATS

AT THE MALLS

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TriNoma - 901 3000

Ayala Malls

Mall	Event
glorietta	C2 Event August 18, 2007 at the Activity Center
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ALABANG TOWN CENTER	Mechanical Action August 17 to 19; 11 am, 3 pm & 6 pm at the Activity Center
AYALA CENTER CEBU	Uyfang Kiosk August 3 to 30, 2007 at the AFEC Access
MARKET! MARKET!	Veggie Superkids August 18, 2007 at the Activity Center
Greenbelt Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Disney's CINDERELLA Kids at REP's Globe Theater - Opens August 11, 2007 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Elements Photoconstructed Realities August 16 to 29, 2007 For more info, pls. call 757-7117 to 21 loc. 14 or email museum_inquiry@ayalamuseum.org
TriNoma	NU 107: Pocket Concert 07 August 23, 2007 at the Activity Center Luxury Car Exhibits August 24 to 30, 2007 at the Activity Center

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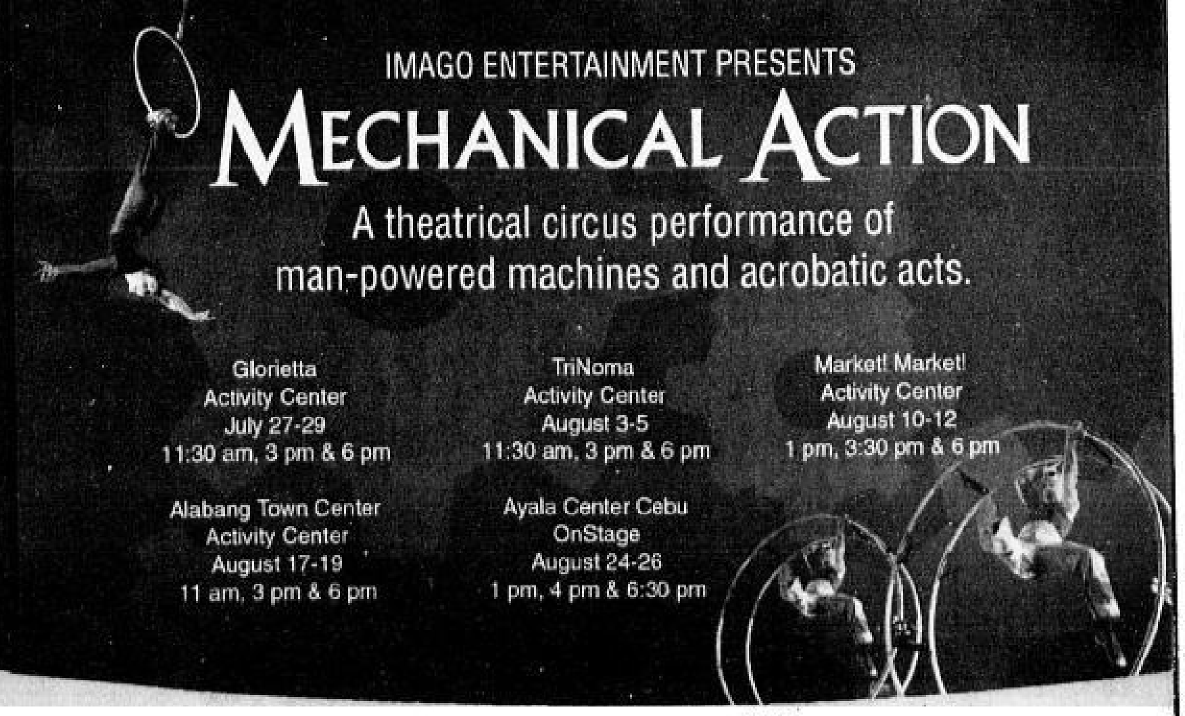

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Activity Center
July 27-29
11:30 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

TriNoma
Activity Center
August 3-5
11:30 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

Market! Market!
Activity Center
August 10-12
1 pm, 3:30 pm & 6 pm

Alabang Town Center
Activity Center
August 17-19
11 am, 3 pm & 6 pm

Ayala Center Cebu
OnStage
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The indie roundtable talks

CHERRY PIE PICACHE, Irma Adlawan and Gina Pareño are three of the most in-demand actors in Pinoy indie films.

Picache was last seen in "Foster Child," for which she won the Best Actress award in the 9th Osian's Cinefan International Film Festival in New Delhi.

Adlawan, a theater actor, first appeared in Jeffrey Jeturian's "Tuhog" (produced by a major studio) and got rave reviews for her work in Ellen Ongkeko's "Pusang Gala," the first Pinoy digital indie film to have a commercial theater run in the country.

Pareño starred in Jeturian's "Kubrador." For this she won the Best Actress award in the Osian's Cinefan Festival last year. The film also won the grand prize in the 2006 Cinemanila International Film Festival, as well the International Critics' Award in the 2006 Moscow International Film Festival.

We continue with the INQUIRER's indie roundtable talks, with the three actors recounting the circumstances that brought them to indie filmmaking. They also explain why they love acting in indie films.

Cherry Pie Picache: Indie filmmakers come up with projects that you would want to sink your teeth into

"To be honest, the first reason that I got into independent filmmaking was, the directors and writers come up with films that you would want to sink your teeth into, especially as an actor. *Yun ang pinaka*-attraction *doon* because we don't always get that in mainstream or commercial films.

"Nandoon ang frustration, especially now that the industry is so much into television more than films. *Medyo naghahanap ka ng malayang pag*-express. [In independent filmmaking], you have a group of people whose only motivation and inspiration to do a film is their passion for their craft—maybe production design, scriptwriting. They enjoy it. Dedicated *sila. Masarap kasama. Hindi* hampered. You work together so *ang sarap nu'ng* feeling.

"Mahirap din ang independent filmmaking *kasi* anything goes. *[Minsan] nagtatatakbo kayo. Sisigawan kayo ng* security guard. *Nawawala ang dignidad mo. Respetadong tao ako e, nasisigawan pa. Pero* you enjoy the journey, you enjoy the process. *Tapos,* more than anything else, *yung* roles, *ibang klase.*

"We are challenged because of the conditions. *Alam mo na 'yung* acting. *Di mo na kailangang ilagay sa* camera. *Pero 'yung* description *ko sa kanya* after three days, all this time I was exposed to the mainstream and commercial filmmaking, all this time *'yung pinag-aaralan ko kung saan ang ilaw. Sa* TV, *pag*-blink *nung* camera, *nakikita mo yung* red tally light, *dapat eksakto 'yung* action *mo doon.* So *lahat 'yun mina*-master *mo depende sa* medium... so all these things you have to adjust to."

Back to zero

"But in my experience with 'Foster Child,' all the things I have learned in my 17 years in the business, *lahat tinapon ko* because I should not be conscious of anything. You have to be back to zero. On the third day, *binibiro ako ng* director *ko, di ko na raw kailangang umarte kasi puro likod ko naman ang kinukunan.* But at the end of the day, you trust the captain of the ship because it's his film. Film is a director's medium. That's what I did.

"Now it's good we have all these technologies to make it easier for the filmmakers and to make it more accessible especially for the young people. *Pero* I don't think *mawawala ito,* as long as we have passionate filmmakers who happen to work as directors, actors, scriptwriters, production designers, directors of photography, *mabubuo 'yan e.*

"Bilang actor din, *habang tumatanda ka,* you're happy. More than the compensation, at the end of the day, you know that you've done something good."

Exploitation

"I'm not saying that mainstream and commercial filmmaking is bad. But independent (filmmaking) is something I want to do.

"Sana huwag lang ma-exploit. I don't know *kung ano ang mas detalyadong* process that directors or writers use to make a film. *Siyempre sila lang ang nakaka-intindi nu'n. Pero sana huwag masyadong ma*-exploit. *'Yun naman ang* hope *ko* for the future, to give the audience an alternative, you know, better films to watch.

"We understand the commercial part of the business is that producers must get their money back, *pero sana magkaroon ng* alternative *para makita rin ng tao na merong mas magandang mga pelikula na pwedeng panoorin.*

Nakaka-frustrate *at nakakalungkot din. Yung* experience *ko sa* Cannes, you realize that a filmmaker transcends culture and language. *Sa* 'Foster Child,' all the different nationalities appreciated it. One journalist in the presscon there said that it's so sad because Filipino filmmakers can be at par with other filmmakers around the world. The only problem is we don't have the money.

"Sana tuloy-tuloy na makilala na ang lahat ng Filipino filmmakers. *Tulong lang at suporta ng lahat ang kailangan."*

Gina Pareño: The feeling is very different; the acting is not forced

"Sa edad kong ito, naging bida pa ako. Isang beses lang nangyari yon. Diyos ko 'Day, sana nung bata-bata pa ako ginawa ko na ang indie. *Sana meron na ito noong araw pa. Di bale,* I'm so thankful. *Pwede ko nang sabihin, pwede na akong mamatay.*

"Anong ginagawa kong tama? Ginagawa kong tumanggap pa ng indie films. Yes. *Gusto ko rin ng* mainstream *pero masarap 'yung* indie, *gawa ng eto 'yung* feeling *ko na hindi na-pu-pwersa 'yung* acting *ko... basta, iba ang pakiramdam ko.*

"Napa-acting *kami na may nakaburol. E di mag-te*-take *na kami. Naku sa haba ng* dialogue, *sa kagitnaaan bumagsak ang luha ko.* Cut! *Sabi ko, 'Direk, tama?' Sabi niya,* 'Less acting.' *Sinabi ko, 'E ano nga ang gagawin ko, Direk?' Nakakaloka talaga.*

"Sinabi ni Direk, 'Mas maganda hindi ka umaarte.' Sabi ko, 'Sige, Direk.' Sa madaling salita, natapos na 'yung movie, *dun ko lang naramdaman na ako pala ay di naman pala ako. 'Yun na 'yung 'Kubrador.'"*

Irma Adlawan: Mainstream producers should think that, maybe, there is a new audience out there, with new requirements

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Ngayon lang po ako nagsimula sa indie films. I am basically a stage actor. *Ang asawa ko (Dennis Marasigan), matagal na sa pelikula* (as an actor-director). It took a while before I entered the film and television industry. I have a different discipline, so to speak. Basically *kasi sa* theater, when you go into rehearsals, the time that they tell you that you're going to start is the time that you're going to start and the time that you are going to end. So *sabi ko, hindi ko yata makakaya yung buong araw na nakaupo ka at hindi mo alam kung kailan ka kukunan at kung makukunan ka. Doon ako takot na takot.*

First TV stint

And then a good friend, Ricky Davao, asked me to guest in a TV show *na dini*-direct *niya. Sabi ko,* Ricky, *ang baba ng binibigay nila sa akin. Sabi niya, sige ibigay mo ang* rate *mo, ipaglalaban kita.* That started my work with TV and film.

Nung dumating ang pelikula, siyempre ang umpisa ko, kaibigan nu'ng kapatid nu'ng asawa ng bida. Dumadaan ka lang, pag minalas-malas na-edit, *di ka pa nakita. Nagsimula ako sa ganoon. Okay lang. Hindi ko naman inasam na magkaroon ng ganoong kalaking parte sa industriya ng pelikula. So sabi ko okey lang,* I'm still doing theater.

The biggest role that was given to me was in Jeffrey Jeturian's "Tuhog." Jeffrey is a friend. Production designer at art director *pa lang siya, kilala ko na. Nung maging direktor na, sabi niya, 'Gusto kitang kunin. Eto 'yung* role.' *Nu'ng nakita ko, sabi ko* Jeffrey, *ang laki nung* role. *Sabi ni* Jeffrey, 'Regal *ito.' Oo nga, sabi ko, makikita ni* Mother [Lily] *ito. 'Huwag kang mag-alala, di nagbabasa ng* script *si* Mother,' *sabi niya. Sabi ko, 'Talaga?'*

So we did the film. For the first time, *nagkaroon ako ng lahat ng* phobia, *lahat ng* stress *lumabas sa katawan ko* during the filming. Then they showed the rushes to Mother. *Nakita ni* Mother. *Sabi niya, 'Ang laki pala nu'ng* role *niya. Bakit hindi artista ang kinuha mo?'*

Tawanan kami. Okey lang 'yun. At least *nagawa na namin 'yung pelikula. Di na pwedeng paulit.*

When we were doing the film, there was a cemetery scene. *Daming tao, siyempre* shooting *e. Hanap sila ng artista.* It was my scene. I'm the only one who was there and the *bangkay. Sabi ng mga tao, sino'ng artista? Hanap sila.* Take. *Tawagin na si* Irma. *Sabi nu'ng tao na narinig ni* Jeffrey, *'Walang mukhang artista.' Sabi nu'ng iba, 'Dito lang muna tayo.'*

So *kinunan yung* scene. *Iyak, iyak, iyak. Pagkatapos ng* scene, *narinig uli ni* Jeffrey *'yung mga tao. Sabi, 'Ah, artista pala siya.' Sabi ko, ang* gauge *pala ng* Filipino people is, *kung marunong kang umiyak, artista ka. Pero kung hindi ka marunong umiyak, di ka marunong umarte.* So *sabi ko* that's a good observation, *pag hindi ka marunong umiyak hindi ka pwedeng mag-artista.*

And then "Pusang Gala" came. Much bigger. *Sabi ko, kung kailan pa ako tumanda. Sana nangyari ito nung bata-bata pa ako.* Anyway, I accepted it. *Doon nagsimula. D'yan na nagsimula yung kumukuha na sila ng* theater people *kasi walang* budget. *Masakit, 'di ba?*

Okay, that's fine. Now we are given the chance to show what we're made of. *Meron nang pag-asang makagawa ng pelikula na talagang* we can sink our teeth into, *na pag-aaralan mo tulad ng ginagawa mo sa isang* play *na iisipin mo kung ano ang gagawin mo. Aalamin mo kung saan nanggaling 'yung eksena bago mo siya gawin.*

Exciting

Now we have things that are exciting to see, exciting to watch that encourages the mind to think. Feeling *ko kasi 'yun ang kulang sa mga pelikula natin. Hindi tayo pinag-iisip. Walang binibigay na bago. Walang* excitement. *'Yun at 'yun din.* Maybe that's the reason it's a dying industry. *Hindi pa nila na-re*-realize *na magbigay naman sila ng bago. Baka natututo na ang Pilipino, ang masang Pilipino. Baka nag-iisip na sila ngayon.*

What am I doing right? I guess it's my dedication and my love for my craft that up to now, I would not settle for anything half-baked, no matter how small, *kahit naglakad lang ako, hindi ko siya kino*-consider *na ano lang, madali yan. Hindi gano'n. Kahit paglalakad pwedeng bigyan ng ibig sabihin.*

Continuous

Dapat, continuous learning. I continue to observe people. *Meron akong isang* observation *na nabasa sa isang* magazine. *Sabi ng isang* famous Hollywood star, *ang* only misgiving *niya dahil sikat na siya ngayon,* he cannot go into a bar and observe people because they are the ones observing him. I think for an actor, that's very important, learning to observe how people react, how people do things, because you learn from them. Because they are the lives you portray. These are the lives you reenact when you go into your work. Now if you lose that, then part of your learning is gone.

I continue to read books, I continue to attend workshops. I continue to attend acting studies, *yung mga* workshops. So it's a continuous learning for me.

For the independent filmmakers, *siguro* what we can do to make it better is for media to help. Media has a big part in the success of independent filmmaking. *Kasi sila 'yung nakikita, nababasa, naririnig ng masang Pilipino.* So I guess it started with you guys (INQUIRER Entertainment), and I guess the others would continue. Hopefully, this would be a really big thing for the filmmaking industry.

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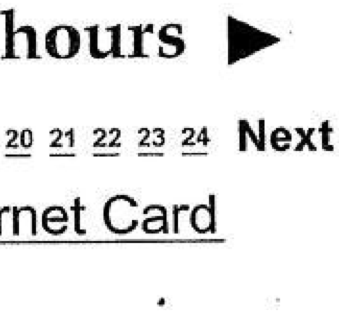

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